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THE NATION

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The USSR at Fifty

ALEXANDER WERTH

SHIRLEY & RONNIE **THE POLITICS OF ENTERTAINMENT** ARTHUR BERGER

T—PART TWO

e Sovereign State of Bell NORMAN L. PARKS

From a Grave at Abda
POEMS by MIKLOS RADNOTI

The Traditional Jew in the Modern World
JULES CHAMETZKY ON ISAAC BASHEVIS SINGER

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LETTERS

users of allegory

Houston, Tex.

DEAR SIRS: After reading "The Hobbit War" by Douglas J. Stewart [*The Nation*, Oct. 9] . . . I find it necessary to tell a professor of classics how to read an allegory. Neither J.R.R. Tolkien nor Edmund Spenser was so stupid as to believe that good and evil "are *in themselves* the causes of events," or that "their 'powers' . . . can be deposited in possessed, unfree beings." Allegory works by portraying abstractions, which both the author and reader know are abstractions, as if they were persons or things. Thus Duessa in Spenser is not an untruthful woman, she is falsehood itself. If Mr. Stewart refuses to permit allegory to be a legitimate literary form, because it allows the author to say things that are not literally true, he should logically object to all other and shorter metaphors (as some 16th-century Puritans did) as falsehood, and wonder how Virgil could have been so stupid as to think Rumor was a winged creature with an eye and a mouth under every feather.

Of course it is possible that the State Department and General Westmoreland have made the mistake of Don Quixote and cannot distinguish literature from ordinary life, but I doubt that they are led to this by reading *The Faerie Queene*, *Pilgrim's Progress*, and *The Lord of the Rings*.

William Kupersmith

all compatriots

New York City

DEAR SIRS: I must plead guilty to Mr. Myers' charge of error (letter, "all look alike," *The Nation*, Oct. 23): Machado is Brazilian of course. However, as to the matter of "spics"—this hint of prejudice is entirely in Mr. Myers' mind.

To the nonspecialist in Spanish and Portuguese there *is* such a thing as Latin American culture—and surely in this sense Machado, Cortázar and Borges are all compatriots. Anything short of this is narrow nationalism—and unworthy of a scholar.

Daniel Stern

a little wider, please

Beverly Hills, Calif.

DEAR SIRS: Mrs. Helen Vlachos, a brave woman and the leading newspaper publisher in Athens, closed down her presses rather than submit to the censorship of the colonels.

For this she was arrested; also for an interview she gave to the foreign press. . . . I applaud her courage. But I protest when she added that she was "no more scared of the dentist than of Colonel Papadopoulos," the so-called strong man.

I'm not sure what she meant by that, but I must insist that the Athenian dentists have enough trouble doing their jobs, considering that the Greeks aren't permitted to open their mouths.

Harry Cimring, D.D.S.

correction

We regret that there was an unfortunate printer's error in Florence Victor's poem "Rigoletto" in the October 9 issue. The final lines should read:

At the top of my voice
I hear you singing,
Incredulous that you are not yet dead
Two years,
That I sing our duet,
Silly or not.

EDITORIALS

Thoughts on the Jubilee

Few men are able to take a more objective view of the Soviet Union than Alexander Werth. He has never attacked the Soviet state because it was the fashion to do so, has never run with the hounds. At the same time, few analysts have been more critical of Soviet faults and, because hatred was not the spur to the writing, few have been more convincing. Werth's piece in the current issue is in that pattern.

It is a pattern far from universal. For a time, the American press and officialdom took a moderate tone toward the USSR, but of late there has been a noticeable change. With the Johnson Administration under increasing pressure to stop bombing North Vietnam and to include the Vietcong in peace overtures, both officials and the press that follows their line have taken again to blaming their troubles on the Russians. This can only increase the trouble for all of us.

The Hoover Institution at Stanford University held a recent conference, "Fifty Years of Communism in Russia," which came closer to the truth about that country. Raymond L. Garthoff, a lecturer at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies and a consultant to the State Department on Soviet affairs, said that there was much reason to doubt that Moscow had instigated, or even favored, the turn to guerrilla warfare in the early sixties. The half century since the Bolshevik Revolution, Garthoff suggested, "bears witness to the fact that the Soviet ideology, system and several generations of leaders have not been committed, or even inclined, to seek a military solution to the problem of the future of world society."

The Russian success with Venus 4, repeating their triumph of ten years ago with Sputnik I, re-emphasizes the excellence of Soviet science and technology. Possibly the Soviets would have withheld announcement of this latest feat until November 7, if the news had not been given out by the Jodrell Bank Radio Observatory, which the Russians had asked to monitor the flight. But they probably have other things in mind for November 7—among them possibly a new initiative to end the war in Vietnam. Such an announcement would evoke even wider world applause than the latest Soviet achievement in space.

As for freedom of expression, it has certainly been hampered, but Max Hayward of Oxford University told the conference that younger writers in the Soviet Union "have been able to achieve—fighting every inch of the way—a surprising measure of creative autonomy." The surest way of arresting further progress would be for the United States to intensify the always latent hostility between the two countries.

To the same end, Prof. Ivo J. Lederer, of the Stanford History Department, pointed out that "the escalating pressures of Peking have had a paralyzing effect on the Soviet political and diplomatic imagination." At the same time, the Vietnamese War precludes a serious *détente* with the United States. Another contributor, John Turkevich

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of Princeton, a chemist and a former science attaché at the U.S. embassy in Moscow, did not regard the Soviet Union as a Marxist state but as a technocracy in which science, both pure and applied, has now become the dominant force.

A similar view has been expressed by Dr. Donald Gould, editor of *New Scientist,* the British publication. After a visit to Academgorodok, the "science city" outside Novosibirsk in Central Siberia, Gould believes that the key influence in the Soviet Union is the realization that the country's future depends on raising the quality of its science and scientists to a level second to none. "True science," he points out, "cannot flourish under the corrupting and distorting influence of irrational and emotionally overcharged ideologies. The lesson of Lysenko has been well-learnt." It would be well if we learned the lesson that Soviet-baiting furthers no interests except those of the cold warriors.

The Real Dean Rusk

Secretary Rusk, says one of his journalistic supporters, came out swinging in his October 12 press conference. The peace forces will welcome Mr. Rusk's switch to open belligerence. Behind that bland, Buddha-like exterior there always lurked a China-hater and a cold-war general of steely determination. For those who remain committed to a military solution in Vietnam, and for that large number who are easily seduced by any exhibition of firmness, Mr. Rusk's statement to the reporters was an effective presentation. The Secretary, however, has no monopoly on swings and jabs—he must be prepared to take as well as to give.

Why did the real Dean surface at just this juncture? In part, no doubt, it was because Washington is feeling a "drumbeat" of criticism on Vietnam; as Ambassador Bunker is reported to have told the duly elected former war lords, Thieu and Ky, Mr. Johnson is in political trouble, and his trouble is their trouble. Another reason for the new Rusk stance is that all previous pretexts for our intervention in Vietnam have failed to convince the country. It was time for a change. The new apologia does indeed come nearer to the truth than the earlier ones. We are not children, as Mr. Rusk remarked, and only children could believe that we are in South Vietnam to preserve the freedom of the South Vietnamese, who would perhaps rather die than live under communism but whose army shows a strange reluctance to suit the action to the resolve. Mr. Rusk is now driven back to the time-worn excuse of national security, with China as the menace to us and our children.

But the Secretary had another motive. Right after he finished speaking to the press, Senator Fulbright was ready with further light on the matter. For nearly a year Mr. Fulbright has been trying to get the Secretary to testify in public before the Foreign Relations Committee. At a press conference the Secretary is fluent enough—no one can really challenge him. He is never at a loss for words on a platform of his own choosing, but before Foreign Relations he would be subjected to possibly embarrassing questions; the verbiage might

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not cover weaknesses in the argument. The Secretary of State preferred introducing his latest rationalizations, clad in new habiliments, before a less critical and more deferential audience.

So now the arguments of treaty commitments, our God-given duty to resist aggression on behalf of our Vietnamese wards, our determination to teach North Vietnam to "let its neighbors alone"—all these arguments, while not abandoned, are shoved to the rear to make room for the motif of vital national interests. A billion Chinese toward the end of the century, armed with nuclear bombs, is the Yellow Peril to which Mr. Rusk now subscribes. Mr. Rusk maintains that his yellow peril is not the yellow peril of Kaiser Wilhelm II or Madison Grant; it is new, different and even more perilous, for now the yellow hordes have the Bomb. Never mind that the United States is overloaded, at home and abroad, with nuclear weapons—thousands of megatons in units large and small. Never mind that half a million American troops are in South Vietnam and not a single Chinese combat soldier is anywhere in Vietnam. The heathen are still a peril—because Mr. Rusk says so—and we must contain them lest they overrun all Asia.

So goes the Rusk thesis. Next week's *Nation* will contain two searching analyses, one by Walter LaFeber, author of *The New Empire,* the other by Oliver Lee of the University of Hawaii. In the meantime, a likely side effect of Mr. Rusk's new line is to saddle President Johnson with a new political liability. If national security is our justification for war in Asia, would not a settlement be open to attack as a sell-out? Can we settle for anything less than military victory? Do we even want the North Vietnamese to come to the negotiating table except to surrender? If the President has any lingering thought of trying to reverse his field, for fear of an adverse verdict at the polls or for any other reason, the new rationalization for interference in Vietnam has made his course even harder.

The Phrase Rediscovered

In the most widely quoted words that were ever written for him, Dwight D. Eisenhower retired from the Presidency with a solemn exhortation: "We must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence . . . by the military-industrial complex." The term caught on because it was a succinct description of a power structure of which everyone was aware, but which for most people was not well defined. In the form of three words and a hyphen, it took on concrete shape. Where hitherto the men and organizations that comprised it had been taken for granted as a necessary instrument of the cold war—and therefore beyond question—now questions were raised. Did a future danger really exist? Was it possible that the danger was already upon us? Probably the most comprehensive answers emerged in the special issue of *The Nation* (October 28, 1961) by Fred J. Cook, which later became his best-selling book, *The Warfare State.*

But soon the excitement died away. General Eisenhower, who had made the phrase famous, dropped it after that first utterance. Either he had rung a false alarm or he considered his responsibility discharged with a single speech or he hoped the phrase would fade away and trouble him no more. The people at large, glad to be relieved of the duty of attending to something unpleasant, returned to their customary concerns. The military-industrial complex itself was pleased to escape the unwelcome illumination that General Eisenhower, almost inadvertently, had turned on its activities.

But now the phrase is in the news again. It bobbed up quite suddenly, as it has before from time to time, but conditions are now ripe for a revival of concern, what with the unending war in Vietnam and the mounting resentment against its chief escalator. Many who were silent are speaking again, and those who gladly ceased from troubling are once more troubled. Seymour Melman, of course, had never been silent. His book, *Our Depleted Society,* was in large part an attack on the "complex," but Melman, after all, is only a professor—though one distinguished enough to have had an audience with President Johnson on this general topic. To bring the matter once more into the limelight, official position was needed, and so the phrase was given new life and currency, not by Melman but by another invaluable servant of the people of the United States, Sen. George D. Aiken. Some Senators from states with big defense interests are feeling the prod to support the war, Mr. Aiken said, citing California and Washington in particular. Murphy and Kuchel of California, and Jackson and Magnuson of Washington are quite naturally hawks, while opposition to the war comes, for instance, from Thruston B. Morton and John Sherman Cooper of Kentucky—a state which, Aiken remarked dryly, "doesn't have much defense industry, does it?"

He could have included himself with Morton and Cooper. Vermont has scenery, lovely old houses, marble and granite and ski-lifts, and manages without much largess from the Pentagon. Then there's Oregon, represented by Morse and Hatfield, in much the same condition of beatitude. This is not to say that Senator Jackson, for instance, was born depraved while Senator Morse was destined from the start for heaven, but rather that Morse, with his inclinations, would probably have experienced insurmountable difficulty in getting himself elected from a defense state, while Jackson would be less militaristic if he did not always see at his back Boeing and all the Boeing workers and executives. Again, it is easier for Eugene McCarthy, representing Minnesota, to urge putting "some kind of limit on the power of the military-industrial complex to control the foreign policy of this nation," than it would be if many of his constituents were living off the Pentagon—and his own campaign funds came in large part from executives of defense industry.

Some top-flight journalists like Joseph C. Harsch and Fred S. Hoffman are speaking out with the anti-war Senators. Harsch notes that we are dealing with the largest specialized market place in the world. The current military budget is roughly $75 billion, to which, by Harsch's figuring, another $20 billion in extra costs for Vietnam will be added. Not all of this is spent on weapons, but weaponry is bought and sold in the biggest single market in the world, and many of the sellers are com-

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panies which sell *only* to the American armed forces. A disarmed world would throw them into bankruptcy; even partial disarmament would see many in financial straits, or scrounging for business in unfamiliar fields. Big and small business alike subsist on defense contracts—General Motors alone lists 36,000 firms as suppliers, and nearly one in ten employed Americans is said to owe his job to defense spending. In this country, it is scarcely a metaphor to say that war has become a way of life.

An even more sinister aspect of the "complex" is its managerial power. The Joint Chiefs of Staff have direct contact with the White House through at least one of their number, who is always present when Secretaries Rusk and McNamara confer with the President. The Chiefs are powerful men, and it would be remarkable if they did not enjoy power and want more of it—and believe devoutly that it is for the country's good that they should have it. By them, and by equally war-minded civilians in the Pentagon, crucial decisions are made. The Pentagon is the most powerful managerial center in the world; economically and therefore to a large extent politically, it is *the* major force in the country. Today it is incomparably more systematized and rationalized than in the relatively innocent years before World War II, and its power is more efficiently applied.

Thruston Morton, who is increasingly blunt these days, says that President Johnson was "brainwashed" into the Vietnamese War by the military-industrial complex. Be that as it may, the interests covered by the term are profiting hugely from the war, and would be discomfited by its end. These interests are a force to be reckoned with, not only in endeavors to end the war but in the long-term preservation of American freedom from military dictation.

A Voice for the Voiceless

A complaint common among citizens actively concerned with the Vietnamese War is that they are politically powerless. They feel that the Administration, and hawks generally, are in a position to enlist those who respond reflexively to demagogic appeals to "support our boys" in a war against "atheistic communism." There are indications, however, that the odds against right and reason are not overpowering. One encouraging sign was last year's election in Dearborn, Mich., summarized in a *Nation* editorial ("The Dearborn Referendum," December 19, 1966). Forty per cent of the Dearborn voters were in favor of an immediate withdrawal of U.S. forces in Vietnam. In the more recent *Cleveland Plain Dealer* straw vote ("Choose Your Poll," July 31) and the one conducted by the Sunday *Charleston* (W. Va.) *Gazette-Mail* ("The Zinn Position," August 28) Howard Zinn, arguing for withdrawal, ran far ahead of Rep. Mendel Rivers ("Escalate and Win"), and Sen. William Fulbright, whose views occupied the middle position ("De-escalate").

The Zinn-Rivers-Fulbright debate spread to Westchester County, the predominantly well-to-do suburban area north of New York City. The *Croton-Cortlandt News* added a fourth option, and the tally went as follows:

Withdraw	112
De-escalate	46
Escalate	9
Present U.S. policy	7
Total	174

The total is small, but it represents 6 per cent of the total readership, as compared with 1.7 per cent in Cleveland. The nearby *Hastings News* obtained a 5.5 per cent response, with 53 per cent favoring withdrawal, 36 per cent de-escalation, 9 per cent escalation, and 2 per cent present American policy. A three-way poll conducted in New York City by the Vietnam Summer Project yielded 62 per cent for withdrawal, 29 per cent for de-escalation, 9 per cent for escalation, the first two percentages being almost identical with those of the *Croton-Cortlandt* tally.

One thing seems certain: President Johnson and Secretary Rusk can derive little comfort from the Westchester results, nor will the John Bucci Presidential poll in Philadelphia console them. Coming *after* his brainwashing statement, Romney led Johnson in Pennsylvania 54 to 46, compared with 51 to 49 last April.

On the West Coast a poll was conducted by the *Clarke Press*, a shopping paper in the greater Portland area, with results summed up in the October 4 issue: "The 'doves' are taking over." Fifty-two per cent favored immediate, unconditional withdrawal, 48 per cent were opposed. (An identically worded question by Rep. Wendell Wyatt last June gave 17 per cent for withdrawal, 76 per cent against.) Among other questions was one asking whether the National Liberation Front should be included as a party in peace negotiations. Seventy-three per cent said yes. The last question was: "Do you believe the war to be, as one leading critic has described it, an 'illegal, immoral and completely unjustifiable American military intervention in Asia?' " Sixty-two per cent did so consider it. The unnamed critic, Sen. Wayne Morse, commented: "This straw vote speaks with the clear voice of reason and I am not surprised at its results."

Concerned citizens are now attempting to get the issue of Vietnam onto various local ballots, as was done in Dearborn. This struggle is being waged in Willoughby, Ohio; whether it is to succeed or not will be decided by the Ohio Supreme Court. A similar effort is being made in Boston. In New York City, two petitions have been submitted to put a war referendum on the ballot in the November election. On the City Clerk's refusal to comply, the Fifth Avenue Vietnam Peace Parade Committee brought suit, on the ground that denial was an infringement on the people's right to free speech. The usual basis of denial is that such propositions can have no "legislative effect." In California this point has been decided by the state Supreme Court. For the majority, Chief Justice Roger J. Traynor held that "the power of initiative must be liberally construed to promote the democratic process." The citizens of San Francisco will vote on November 7 on whether they wish the United States to withdraw immediately from Vietnam.

The official ballot arguments of the two sides afford an interesting contrast. The "yes" arguments are soberly worded. Typical arguments for the opposition are that withdrawal would result in "the wholesale slaughter of

(Continued on page 435)

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SHIRLEY & RONNIE

THE POLITICS OF ENTERTAINMENT

ARTHUR BERGER

Mr. Berger, an assistant professor at San Francisco State College, is the author of a forthcoming book, Li'l Abner: An American Satire.

San Francisco

The candidacy of Shirley Temple Black for Congress from San Mateo County in California has generated a considerable amount of news, comment and confusion all over the country. Coming on the heels of successful adventures by two other entertainment figures, George Murphy and Ronald Reagan, her decision to run for Congress raises an interesting question: has California led the way to a new curiosity, a politics of entertainment?

One may say, of course, that all successful politicians have at least a touch of the entertainer in their make-ups. Churchill, Roosevelt, La Guardia — a host of great performers comes to mind. But there is more to it than that. Americans pride themselves on having "escaped from history," on having developed native philosophies and a distinctive character. If we are ahistorical why shouldn't we also be apolitical? And what could be more apolitical than having actors *play* at governing the land? They'll help you smile your troubles away.

It may be that a new kind of legitimacy has developed. To Max Weber's list of "traditional," "rational-legal" and "charismatic" we can add "entertaining," the perfect leader for an entertainment culture, a culture of spectators at the rites of love, war, the World Series—and now politics.

One can suggest several reasons why the player-candidate has arisen at just this time. Our sanitized, somewhat sterile environment, whose architecture and planning act to preclude human relationships—the deadening quality of life itself—make amusement an essential substitute for experience, and suggested entertainment candidates as part of the strategy of maximum thrill.

Also, we Americans fear politics as something dirty. The word has negative connotations in a country where a major distinction is made between the morality of private relationships and the politics of public affairs. People seldom consider that public responsibility only reflects private morality, and that when politicians are "bought," someone does the buying. Given the view that politics is by nature dirty and corrupting, the entertainment candidate who presents himself as innocent, idealistic and untainted by experience is bound to exert a formidable appeal. This has long been so: in 1828, John Quincy Adams, basing his campaign upon his experience and the complexity of politics, was trounced by "nature's nobleman," Andrew Jackson—himself an entertainer of note. The same thing happened to Pat Brown in 1966; he failed to reckon with the element of ritual cleansing in the art of voting. The people absolve themselves of guilt in a ceremony of redemption, whereby an "innocent" leader takes upon himself the burden of history and everything that is part of it—riots, discrimination and the University of California. When Brown campaigned on the basis of his experience and the involved nature of the issues, he implicated all Californians in the problems of the state. He spread the guilt (for Watts and other inequities), whereas Reagan promised to relieve the people of guilt because he would show that nothing was really wrong. A little common sense and lower taxes would fix the state as good as new.

Shirley Temple Black claims she's not running on her name, but that is how it will appear on the ballot. It will help evoke memories of *On the Good Ship Lollipop*, Little Miss Marker and the joys of childhood which seemed lost but now can be recaptured. Will the fact that she was a child star hurt her? It is doubtful, since children are seen as innocent, and innocence is the quality we seem to be looking for in politicians.

For those who didn't see her thirty years ago, Shirley Temple film festivals are popping up, as promoters take advantage of the publicity generated by her campaign. Shirley Temple dolls are also to be marketed again. All of this will help her, since her problem with the voters is less to create an image than to recall one. She also plugs away at morality, an issue that generally brings out a large women's vote. (Morality and nostalgia are a combination hard to beat.) When she walked out on the San Francisco Film Festival because of the alleged "pornography for profit" of *Night Games,* Mrs. S. T. Black captured the hearts of many well-to-do matrons of San Mateo County, who will no doubt find her combination of effulgent moralism and political conservatism delectable. San Mateo has the reputation of being the Orange County of Northern California, and reactionary politics is almost always swathed in fundamentalist moralism.

Shirley Temple's campaign is based on *Kaffeeklatsches,* where she appears among her constituents-to-be in homey intimacy. Her political beliefs are standard stuff: eliminate "wasteful" spending, vocational education for the underprivileged (Booker T. Washington would have approved), and local control of everything. She thinks we can end the war in Vietnam quickly by mining Haiphong harbor. She gets her information and arrives at her views by reading the newspapers and *U.S. News & World Report.* She also claims to have had "briefings" and to have many "sources" in Washington.

However, the main thrust of Mrs. Black's campaign is not political: she promises to provide inspirational leadership, to see things from the perspective of the housewife, which is how she identifies herself. It must be remembered that in America morality is thought to be the province of the female and, indeed, to be somewhat effeminate.

Now that Shirley has joined George and Ronald

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on the "larger stage," a discernible pattern is beginning to emerge and the role of entertainment in politics is changing. It was almost always necessary for even the most iron-faced of politicians to be able to tell a few jokes, tug a few heartstrings, wear a few bizarre hats, but that was only part of the job. Now, being able to entertain seems not only necessary but also sufficient. Politics, which addresses itself to ordering life and solving problems, has given way to entertainment, which allows us to pretend the order and escape the problems.

As our sense of community withers and institutions which traditionally have held society together atrophy, entertainment becomes the new cohesive force. Not only does it give people "images" to shape their identity and a particular sense of reality, it also gives them a politics. America is a "happy-ending nation." And California, where the future is being shaped, is full of newcomers, trying to escape the past in the promised land. Half a million people pour into the state every year, and those already there move around with abandon. There is little sense of community in California, so its people grasp at anything that can give them a sense of belonging. The easiest "group" to belong to is the television audience, with other entertainment media playing supporting roles.

In that environment the entertainment figure has a trump card: people not only recognize his name; they may even identify him with his roles. How, then, does one combat the entertainment candidate? This, perhaps, is the most significant question raised by Shirley Temple Black's run for Congress.

It is obvious that we can't point to lack of experience: the less experience a candidate has the better. Only in business are experts needed; elsewhere a kind of "natural wisdom" enjoyed by all good, ordinary Americans is enough. So if you can't beat them—join them, by running another entertainment figure. This strategy is being seriously considered in California (though no entertainment candidate is opposing Mrs. Black) and a number of actors contemplate political flings. Why not? They have everything needed to succeed in politics—money, a name, the capacity to amuse, and docility. The great virtue of the entertainer candidate is that in the judgment of the party professionals, by and large he does what he is told. An actor is someone who pretends to be what he is not, says what he is told to say, and succeeds to the extent that he can make his performance credible. Thus, when he turns to public affairs he can also be more easily manipulated by the power interests who back him than can the politician, who may display an inconvenient sense of independence.

A political candidate could, of course, try to outentertain the entertainment candidate and probably in a number of cases he might succeed—which doesn't speak well for either politics or entertainment. In either case—running another entertainer or outentertaining the entertainer—the move is away from politics. The philosopher-king as model for the ideal ruler has been eclipsed by the entertainer-star, and with that we have erased several thousand years of history. The image of the king grew out of that of the magician, so our electronic gadgetry is taking us backward, to the primitive village, where politics

Franklin, Toronto Star

On the Good Ship Lollypop!

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was dominated by other "entertainment figures." But have we really abandoned the political state for the euphoric state and the trance induced by the hypnotic spell of the one-eyed baby sitter? It is still too soon to say so in final despair.

Both the Murphy and the Reagan victories were somewhat exceptional cases, involving white backlash and the pitting of all-out conservatives against good-natured and perhaps too easygoing liberals. Salinger and Brown were, for various reasons, vulnerable, and their defeats may prove in the end significant of a trend. Brown's loss was certainly significant as far as the *lives* of Californians are concerned. The Reagan administration, though it promised to cut taxes, has raised them. It did, however, cut down on benefits. Reagan has attacked all welfare services and will soon impose fees on the state colleges and university system (whose president, Clark Kerr, he fired, and replaced with an accountant). Recent polls show that his popularity is beginning to drop as the initial good will accorded to all successful candidates starts ebbing. Perhaps the honeymoon is over.

Whether Reagan can parlay Orange County and his famous "sincerity" into a Republican nomination on the national ticket remains to be seen, especially after the cold reception he suffered recently at Eureka. California's political climate is as exceptional as its weather (Goldwater found this out), and the entertainer in politics may be only a local phenomenon. But there can be no doubt that Reagan represents the most important penetration of politics by an entertainer to this date. Though he has made a "four-year contract" with the people of California, few think he would refuse the nation's call if it came his way. Once you get used to playing the knight on horseback it's hard to stop!

Year of Jubilee: The USSR at Fifty

ALEXANDER WERTH

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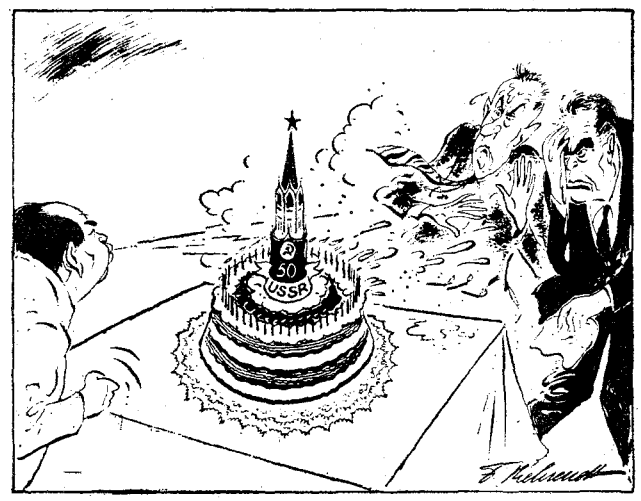
Paris

On November 7 the Soviet regime will celebrate its fiftieth birthday. It was on that day in 1917 that the Bolsheviks, under the leadership of Lenin, seized power and set up "the first Socialist state in the world."

There is something terribly chancy about jubilees, and the present Soviet Government is lucky that the half-century anniversary falls in 1967. For it may truthfully be said this year that the Russians have never had it so good. It would have been awkward if the jubilee had fallen, say, in 1964, when the current wisecrack was that "communism equals collectivization plus Canadian wheat" (vast quantities of which had to be imported after the fearful drought of 1963). Nor would 1962 have been a good jubilee year, when Khrushchev brought Russia to the brink of a nuclear war over Cuba. As for the thirtieth and twentieth birthdays, it is better not to remember them: 1947 was a year of acute famine; and 1937—a year of mass arrests and mass deportations at the height of the Yezhov-Stalin terror—continues to be a byword of horror, fear and insecurity.

All kinds of economic and other targets are to be fulfilled for the present jubilee. In Leningrad, where scaffolding runs the length of the Nevsky and along many other streets, the whole city is to be given a thorough face lift by November 7. The third of the great Leningrad subway lines must be completed before the year is out; so



Ben Roth

must the impressive new Kalinin Avenue in Moscow with its numerous new 12- and 14-story buildings, including the spectacular "open book" skyscraper, which will be the new headquarters of the SEV—Comecon, as it is called abroad. Similar jubilee targets have been set in every other city of the Soviet Union.

But there is nothing "final" about 1967. The country is in a state of spectacular economic development, but also in a state of transition, though in many respects a very slow transition. For several years now economists have been waging a sharp dispute: the "liberals," including Libermann, Lisichkin and Meyendorff, stand for greater personal incentives, more room for initiative in every factory and on every farm; the "Stalinist" centralizers cling to the most rigid state planning on the ground that, despite much waste, the Stalin Five Year Plans produced in the end the necessary results.

Kosygin tends, on the whole, to side with the "liberals," but the resistance from the "conservatives" is strong. The

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"liberals" satirize Kosygin's timid concessions to their point of view with the story that a number of Russian traffic experts went to England, where they found much to be said for left-side driving. "Well," said Kosygin, "let's try it out as an experiment: 20 per cent of the traffic will drive on the left and 80 per cent, as before, on the right." In other words, the "liberals" hold that their principles must be applied to the whole of the economy. They recognize that most Soviet leaders have strong ideological objections to liberalizing the economy, since for them it "smacks too much of capitalism," but they take some consolation from the fact that even the Soviet diehards are prepared to use Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Eastern Germany as their guinea pigs. If "liberal" principles are found to work there, without turning the countries into capitalist states, then, but only then, will the Soviet Union perhaps adopt the methods. However, this dispute among the economists, though fundamental to the future of Russia, is a long-term affair, and the victory of the "liberals" is still far out of sight.

Apples and Oranges

The "liberals" also say that the great improvements in agriculture achieved since the fall of Khrushchev were, in the last analysis, achieved the "wrong" way: the peasants were given much more freedom to develop their private plots and to own as much livestock as the plots could accommodate. But although this greatly eased the food situation in Russia after 1965, the "reform" amounted to a confession of failure as regards *Socialist* agriculture. The important goal was not to get the peasants more interested in their private plots but to find the means and incentives to direct their energies to the collective or state farm. Through the manipulation of prices, something was done in that direction, but not nearly enough.

Thus, because the State Planners have offered no encouragement for transportation from the south to the north, millions of tons of fruit are allowed to rot, and the retail price of apples, grapes and tomatoes is as absurdly high in Moscow and Leningrad as the price of imported bananas and oranges. Altogether, the distribution system remains one of the weakest spots in the Soviet economy; there are not nearly enough shops, and even with goods plentiful, shopping remains highly complicated and a fearful waste of time. No wonder Soviet visitors to the West are still overwhelmed by a visit to a Monoprix, Selfridge's or a Bloomingdale's, where the operation takes only a few minutes.

However, the difficulties of shopping are much less than they were a few years ago, and now constitute only one of the minor annoyances of Soviet everyday life. Without knowing much about the great quarrel going on among the economists, everybody—or nearly everybody—in Russia today feels that times are better than ever. Even the young people, who cannot remember the fearful shortages of the past, see that conditions have improved steadily in the last few years. Older people not only survived the Stalin terror, the war and the very hard immediate postwar years; they also remember that in but very few of the fifty years of the Soviet regime was life even reasonably tolerable.

To put it in the simplest of terms; during very few of those fifty years did the Russian people have enough to eat. The first five years of the Soviet regime were a time of civil war, famine, epidemics and economic chaos. Then followed a short respite during the NEP period, except that housing remained as terrible as ever. After Stalin's collectivization drive, there were two more years of acute famine, and then, in 1936-37, when food was somewhat more available, the terror struck. In 1941 came the war in which 20 million Russians lost their lives. The immediate postwar years, marked by the 1947 famine and a new wave of the Stalinist terror, were also very bitter. In the 1950s, the tide began to turn, but only slowly.

Housing, Healing, Teaching

Today industry is booming (nearly six times more steel is being produced than in 1940). There are no food shortages. Even more important, there is—perhaps for the first time in Russian history—no serious housing shortage, except in such "population magnets" as Moscow where there will *always* be too many people. Ever since 1952 or 1953, by which time the cities devastated in the war had been rebuilt, construction has been going on like mad. Moscow is spreading out in all directions, with thousands of new 6- or 7-story blocks of flats, and the pace is even faster in the enormous new Siberian cities like Omsk and Novosibirsk. Leningrad alone has built some 40,000 new flats in the last year—all with central heating and bathrooms. Almost every other citizen whom I met in Russia last summer had moved into a new house in the past few years. And the rents are extremely low—roughly, 5 rubles a month for each room. Thus a three-room flat costs only about $15 a month, with light, heating and gas included.

Two other factors are of the utmost importance to the quality of life in present-day Russia. First, the people are offered an absolutely free and highly efficient medical service. The country's infant mortality rate is one of the lowest in the world, and Russians now live so long that the many millions of old-age pensioners (women at 55, men at 60) have become a major financial problem for the state. The second factor is education. Russia now gives the impression of being perhaps the best-educated, most literate nation in the world, one seized with a genuine passion for education and "culture." I shall return to this in a moment.

These gains, in a direct sense, may have little to do with Lenin, but the slogan, "we owe all this to Lenin," is attractive, especially during this jubilee year. The more sophisticated know, of course, that the creation of an effective welfare state in Russia was nowhere near the top of Lenin's priorities. They also know that there were many things Lenin did not foresee: the *embourgeoisement* of the working class in Western Europe, fascism, the atomic bomb. But the fact remains that fifty years ago Russia was an uncouth, barbarous, diseased and illiterate country which, apart from a remarkable intellectual elite, resembled more closely the backward countries of Asia

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than the advanced countries of the West. If there is anything still highly topical in Lenin's writings, it is his angry indictment of the medical services and of education during the last twenty years of the czarist regime.

So there arises this simple and effective jubilee argument: if it had not been for Lenin and the October Revolution, we should still be living like pigs. The very young, especially, feel a genuine gratitude to Lenin. He is also being deliberately built up as a noble and *pure* figure, which neither Stalin nor Khrushchev, his principal successors, can be said to have been.

The Fallen Leaders

The attitude toward both of these later men is very mixed. Older people loathe Stalin for the purges and the concentration camps (and only too many have had direct experience of both), and yet preserve a sneaking admiration for the leader "who, after all, did see us through the war." The Stalin "personality cult" is still strongest, perhaps, among World War II soldiers. To very young people, Stalin has already become a rather hazy and confusing figure ("he *must* have done a lot of good if he industrialized Russia and won the war; but, on the other hand, there were the terror and the camps"). One young man in Leningrad even told me that he much preferred Stalin to Khrushchev for a (to me) quite unexpected reason: "Between 1948 and 1953 food prices were cut several times; under Khrushchev they went up, and have remained at that high level ever since." I strongly suspect that if, apart from Solzhenitsyn's *Ivan Denisovich* and one or two others, no books are now allowed to be published on purges and camps, it is because the present leaders prefer Stalin to become as nebulous a figure as possible in the eyes of the young: to tell the whole truth is really too discreditable to the "glorious fifty years" of the regime.

Paradoxically enough, the hostility to Khrushchev is more general than to Stalin. To the intellectuals he remains on balance a "positive" character—the man who threw open the camps and stopped the police terror. But to ordinary citizens he "lacked dignity," was a clown and an exhibitionist, and, with his endless improvisations, made an infernal mess of agriculture and delayed the present economic prosperity "by ten years." Worse still, "he was the chap who nearly landed us in a nuclear war with America."

Every Russian has convinced himself that a nuclear war with America would be "the end of everything"—both for Russia and for America. They are equally certain that the Americans share this realization and that, therefore, a nuclear war between the two is a purely theoretical possibility. If there is much resentment against China, it is based, above all, on the supposition that nothing would please the Chinese better than a war between Russia and America. Peking is suspected of trying to provoke it in all kinds of ways—not least by forcing the Russians to send a large part of their supplies to Vietnam by sea in the hope that these voyages may produce a Soviet-American naval incident which could, with luck, lead to war.

Russia's Enemies

In theory, the United States is Russia's Enemy Number One; but in reality it is only Enemy Number Three. Enemy Number One is China; Enemy Number Two, Western Germany. As a high official of the Soviet Foreign Office said to me during a remarkably candid two-hour conversation, there were two main reasons why, in spite of everything, Kosygin agreed to meet President Johnson at Glassboro: first, he wanted to give a push to the non-proliferation treaty, to which the Russians attach the greatest importance; and second, he thought it essential to warn Johnson that if West Germany were to get nuclear weapons "in any shape or form," Russia would not hesitate to take the law into its own hands. Germany killed 20 million Russians in the last World War, and nearly destroyed the Soviet Union; Russia is not going to take any chances again.

It would take far too long to examine all the "ideological" Russian arguments against China and particularly against Mao Tse-tung, who is accused of holding anti-Leninist, anti-Marxist, adventurist and great-power chauvinist views. On the official level, China is not yet taken very seriously as a threat to Russia. Sergei Lapin, until recently Soviet Ambassador in Peking, with whom I had a long talk, spoke jokingly rather than angrily of Mao's "Cultural Revolution," and even thought that it did not in fact greatly interfere with China's still very primitive economy. Certain sectors of the economy, he said, were unquestionably under firm government control, since the Chinese would not otherwise have been able to produce their H-bomb. "But I can assure you that it doesn't worry us in the slightest. Perhaps in ten years' time we'll start worrying, but not now. What we do dislike is Mao's determination to push us into a war with the United States. But he can't get away with that." When I asked Lapin why he had been recalled from China, he grinned: "Well, if they bump off the Soviet Ambassador, that's a major diplomatic incident; if they bump off the chargé d'affaires, it's only a minor one!"

But if top Soviet officials are not worried about China, there is nevertheless strong anti-Chinese feeling in the country. I came across it on every occasion. In addition to their anger at China's alleged eagerness to provoke a war between Russia and the United States, the people recognize that China has nearly *five times* the population of the Soviet Union, and believe that one day that "population cauldron" is bound to explode. Further, the Chinese *may* be crazy enough to start chucking H-bombs around, since they apparently have the mad idea that there will always be enough Chinese left to carry on. Even now there are no end of frontier incidents on the infernally long Chinese-Soviet border. I heard all sorts of quite fantastic figures quoted: some said, for instance, that as many as 5 million Russian troops are stretched along the Chinese border. I also met officers' wives who were very worried because their husbands were stationed on that border. The press has made some references to frontier incidents, notably a dispatch from K. Simonov in *Pravda* on July 19; but on the whole the situation is kept quiet.

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The war in Vietnam also has a Chinese angle; but for Chinese obstruction, Russian aid to Vietnam could be much more effective and the Americans might have given up by now. However, there are other sides to the Vietnamese problem. Russians, of course, feel much sympathy for "the heroic and invincible people of Vietnam," though not quite enough to want Russia to intervene directly. At the same time, they feel that Vietnam "is costing us an awful lot," though it would never do for the Soviet Union not to help a "fellow Socialist country." What Vietnam is in fact costing the Russians in aid is estimated at nearly $2 billion a year, approximately the figure for American lend-lease to Russia during World War II.

A charity-begins-at-home mood is unquestionably strong in the USSR. Cuba "costs a lot"; so does aid to the "developing countries"—and thirty-five such countries (sixteen in Asia, seventeen in Africa and two in Latin America—Brazil and Chile) now benefit from "economic and technical cooperation" with the Soviet Union. At the Soviet Government department dealing with this "cooperation" I was told in detail of the great mutual benefits it provided, and was assured that these countries gained much more by dealing with the Soviet Union than with capitalist countries. But the Russian public is not convinced that the Soviet Union has much to gain. "Why should *we* pay for the Aswan Dam?" In particular, there is a sharp dislike of the African students who come to the Soviet Union, and it is true that many of them behave with provocative arrogance and insolence. The Russians explain that their dislike has nothing to do with color; they attribute it rather to "social" reasons: most of these students belong to the African plutocracy. That is partly true; but it is also true that girls avoid dates with Africans, since their fellow Russians hotly disapprove of such "fraternization."

The 'Jewish' Problem

This runs sharply counter to the boast that there are "no national or racial hatreds" inside the USSR, and the antipathy toward Africans does not extend to any other "colored" peoples, Indians, Arabs or Japanese. If, under Khrushchev, notoriously an anti-Semite, there was still something of a "Jewish problem" in Russia it has almost ceased to exist. No doubt very orthodox Jews (a rapidly dwindling minority) are frowned upon, as is any other kind of religious sectarianism, but Jews are becoming more and more assimilated and hold prominent positions in practically every field—science, industry, medicine, the press, the cinema, music, etc. If they are still virtually excluded from the diplomatic service, the same is true in France, England and many other countries.

On this point, it is significant that the Israeli-Arab war was never related to any kind of "Jewish problem." The Israelis were never called Jews in the Soviet press. The official line was that there had been an act of "Israeli aggression": but, in reality, the matter was much more complex. In my talk with the high foreign office official already mentioned I was told:

> There are rights and wrongs on both sides. The Israelis did attack Syria in April. On the other hand, Nasser did not play his hand too well. We were *not* consulted about the withdrawal of the UN troops from Sinai and *not* informed of the closing of the Gulf of Aqaba by the Egyptians. When the Israelis hit out on June 5, they were guilty of a gross act of aggression. But the attack was not entirely unprovoked. It is *not* true that Nasser, who has the makings of a real statesman, threatened to destroy, like Hitler, "every man, woman and child in Israel," but the head of the Palestine Arabs, a real son of a bitch, *did* say it.

He added, however, that if the Israelis had captured Damascus, Soviet armed forces would have intervened one way or another. He then said: "We Soviets warned Nasser on June 3 against attacking Israel, while de Gaulle gave a similar warning to Israel. History will finally establish whether the Israelis genuinely panicked or whether their hawks like Dayan gained the upper hand."

It was all highly regrettable, he continued, and the war in the Middle East might even yet develop into a serious affair. Something must be done about the Palestinian Arabs and it would, of course, be a good thing if the Arab states recognized the state of Israel, but Russia could not *force* them to do it. It was only natural for the Soviet Union to be on the side of the Arab countries, "which are becoming more and more Socialist and progressive."

"What, with the Communists in jail?"

"They aren't any more in Egypt and Syria, and those in Iraq are also now being let out."

"Has the war caused no repercussions among the Jews in Russia?"

"No, our Jews are, more than ever, loyal Soviet citizens, and Zionism implies divided loyalties; so there are no Zionists in Russia, or mighty few. *They had good reason to want to get away to Israel under Stalin, even under Khrushchev, but not now.*"

What I ran into was great contempt for the Egyptians as soldiers; they had been caught idiotically unprepared, and $1,000 million worth of good Soviet equipment (including the whole Egyptian air force) had been wiped out. Here was a clear example of "wasting money on such people"; it was just like the help given to the Chinese up to 1960—"and look at them now!"

Writers and Hacks

Visiting Russia today, one is least happy about the state of literature. The place bursts with talent; but it is not given sufficient chance to assert itself. The Writers' Congress in May was an unspeakably dreary affair, starting with the usual praise of Socialist realism and of the "educative" value of literature by that old hack, now president of the Writers' Union, Konstantin Fedin. Before the congress there had been a kind of "gentlemen's agreement" that since this was jubilee year the "conservatives" (or "Stalinites") and the "liberals" would not claw each other. But the pact was broken by Sholokhov, who launched a particularly vicious attack on Ilya Ehrenburg, the real leader of the "liberals." I later saw Ehrenburg in his flat on Gorki Street; it was not so much a flat as a museum, worth no doubt a couple of million dollars—with Matisses, Légers, Modiglianis, Chagalls and numer-

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ous Picassos—all given to him by the artists themselves. When I asked Ehrenburg (who was physically very enfeebled but as alert as ever) what he thought of the Sholokhov attack, he said: "Oh, I'm not worried about it; that sort of thing has happened to me too often before."

Poor Ehrenburg! He spoke enthusiastically of the new volume of memoirs on which he was at work—a volume on the Khrushchev period; two months later he was dead. On the whole, he was optimistic about the future of Soviet literature. "I will not see a great Soviet literature in my lifetime; but there will be one in twenty years' time. The '*Samizdat*' (self-publisher—i.e., books circulated in typescript) is today one of the most important 'publishers' in Russia." He shrugged his shoulders when I referred to Solzhenitsyn's memorandum to the congress, whose organizers refused to have it discussed. In it Solzhenitsyn not only attributed all Russian literature's ills to *Glavlit*, the meaningless euphemism for censorship, but also spoke of the victimization to which he had himself been subjected by the police who had confiscated his archives and several manuscripts. Solzhenitsyn also remarked that under the Soviet literary system all that was being produced was parochial, village-pump literature of no world importance. Since then there have been rumors (or are they only a jubilee year gesture of appeasement?) that his two confiscated novels will be published.

It would be naive to suppose that the desperate resistance from conservative writers to the liberalization of literature is purely ideological. It is also a question of bread and butter, for if talented experimental and nonconformist poets and prose writers were given more freedom to publish, magazines and book houses would give them preference and the market for the Stalinist hacks would shrink.

Despite the entrenched hostility, the liberals seem to be winning. For instance, that work of real genius, Valentin Katayev's *The Holy Well*, a surrealist "dream novel," a sort of joyful Kafkaesque story, could not conceivably have been published a few years ago. I spent a day with Katayev at his *dacha* in Peredelkino, the "writers' village," some 20 miles outside Moscow. Katayev, now 71, recently had a prostate operation ("I had to have it done; it was awful to have to go and pee every ten minutes"), and under the anaesthetic had experienced strange dreams which gave him the idea for this story. It is full of curious symbols—even a symbol of Stalinism: a talking cat which is trained to say *Máma* in Russian and *Maman* in French, but which suddenly dies of overexertion when it is ordered to say "neocolonialism."

Katayev and I had rather a lot to drink that night, and in the end he let fly: "There are really only *two* decent writers left in the whole of Peredelkino—me and old man Chukovsky. Most of the others write nothing but crap. Leonov was once a good writer but he then knuckled under to Stalin and never became a real writer again. Fedin also writes nothing but unreadable bilge; when he sends his dreary third-rate *à la* Gorki novels to *Novy Mir*, the whole staff is in a state of depression for days. But how can they refuse? He's president of our precious Writers' Union. Gorki was a great writer in his own way, but let me tell you: Gorki, as the 'father' of Socialist realism has been the greatest curse of Russian literature of the last thirty-five years. Back to fantasy, I say! Back to the 1920s!"

This knocking down of old idols was most refreshing in 1967. Inevitably, we got onto the subject of Siniavsky and Daniel, sentenced respectively to seven and five years in prison. "Look, Valentin," I said, "I've been telling everybody till I'm blue in the face that Siniavsky and Daniel are the greatest boon abroad to anti-Soviet propaganda; if it weren't for them, the propagandists would have mighty little to say."

"Yes, it's a bad business, and all Russian writers, except a few Stalinist diehards, are dead against their prison sentences and the trial generally. But our ordinary people don't look at it quite that way. For them, S. and D. published their stuff with anti-Soviet, probably CIA-subsidized publishing houses abroad; and under pseudonyms, too. They are, therefore, double-crossing twerps and *unpatriotic*. To be *unpatriotic* is the very worst thing to be in Russia. Jail, no; but they should have been given some public censure, ostracised, if you like. Kosygin was against the trial and the whole damned thing, but he was outvoted on the Presidium."

Katayev was not pessimistic about the future of Soviet literature: *Samizdat* was publishing a lot of interesting things, and there were dozens of talented young writers who would, in the end, break out. "And we have some *real* poets—Voznesensky, Akhmadullina, yes, also Yevtushenko, and quite a few more. . . ."

Class and Talent

Is there such a thing as *homo Sovieticus*? A few years ago, when Khrushchev prophesied that "our children" would live under "full communism," I was inclined to think that such a new human species was developing. I don't think so any more. What is developing is something rather different—the intensely patriotic Russian, the very civilized human being, mad on culture and education, with much inner discipline injected into him by the Komsomol, but also with a remarkably nonsectarian view of the world. Economically, there *is* a class system in Russia: top-circulation writers live in their *dachas* at Peredelkino; top industrial executives, top scientists, are literally millionaires. At the other end of the scale unskilled laborers earn 70 to 80 rubles a month, and the old-age pensioners scrape by with 30, 60 or 100 rubles. But, by and large, people accept these differences as measures of "merit" and "value to the state." The top layer also have private cars, but the purchase of these is discouraged; a small Soviet car that sells for $800 abroad costs five times that amount in Russia.

One curious thing that I discovered was that though all workers are Soviet citizens, some categories are proud of their occupation and others are ashamed. The industrial worker is a particularly proud individual, considering himself very much a first-class citizen. People in "trade," on the contrary, tend to be ashamed of doing nothing better; they attribute their lowly status to "lack of education," and many do their utmost to get out of it by taking evening classes or correspondence courses.

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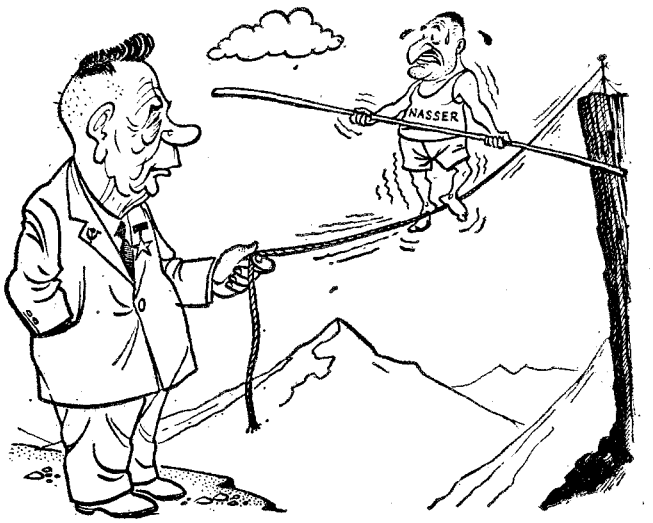

Bernie, Aux Ecoutes (Paris): Ben Roth

The feeling of being second-class citizens may account for the proverbial boorishness and couldn't-care-less inefficiency of shop assistants, but the people suffering from the worst inferiority complex are waiters, who are humiliated by having a "lackey occupation." Gone are the wonderfully efficient and courteous servants I knew during the war. Old man Suvorov, at the Metropole in Moscow, was proud of having been a waiter "under two czars," and then during twenty-five years of the Revolution—"but that hardly counts." He was so efficient at his job that he was made head waiter at the Teheran and Yalta conferences. I even have a photo of him serving a lip-smacking Churchill with a huge bowl of caviar. But this species is completely extinct. Today, some waitresses work full time because they have "a large family and no education." The waiters are nearly all working part time. I had a long talk with one at the October Hotel in Leningrad, a young fellow of 24, with a wife and two children. As a waiter, he was quite useless; but then he was proud of *not* being a waiter. He was a student at an engineering college, and was adding to his student's grant of only 30 rubles by earning an extra 80 rubles at the hotel. He hated it. And he was a good example of the fact that though there may not be enough *liberté* in Russia, and no *égalité*, there is *fraternité*! In what other country would a waiter invite a customer to his house for supper? Albert Ivanovich not only treated me to a glass of cognac, when I ran into him in a buffet, and then offered me a Havana cigar (one of those millions of unwanted Havana cigars that Castro dumps on Russia) but invited me to supper at his house the next day. His wife, a teacher, and his two small children were charming, and I spent a delightful evening with them.

Albert Ivanovich played *The Emperor Concerto* on his phonograph and then the Beatles and other pop music on his tape recorder—music he had picked up from foreign radio stations. He said: "This music is terribly popular with our Komsomols and the party leaders have reconciled themselves to pop, saying that after all it is a creative popular art produced by the people of the United States, Britain and France. The Beatles, for example, are unquestionably of proletarian Liverpool origin."

Unlike the Russians of the Stalin days—and to a lesser extent of the Khrushchev days—the ordinary Russian today wears no blinkers. He reads the Soviet papers, but usually finds them a bore. To add to their grasp of what's going on in the world, nearly all Russians (at least in the cities) listen to the B.B.C. or the Voice of America (they prefer the B.B.C. which is "more objective and less cantankerous"). They sometimes also listen to Radio Peking, but only for fun—to hear the elaborate obscenities with which the Chinese treat the Soviet leaders. The B.B.C. informs them of such things as the Solzhenitsyn letter to the Writers' Congress, of further developments in the Siniavsky-Daniel affair, and, of course, of Svetlana Alliluyeva. The attitude to Stalin's daughter is that she is totally *unpatriotic*. When you are the daughter of Stalin you ought to have a little more dignity; if not a great man, Stalin was after all a big man; so *noblesse oblige*. And she's a liar too, saying that Stalin fell under the evil influence of Beria. All the horrors had started long before Beria. The least she could do would be to give her ill-gained millions to North Vietnam. She might then recover a little of the respect she has lost in her own country.

The Russians are wild for culture, and "culture" is dirt-cheap. Books cost next to nothing; a cinema seat is 15c. The most glorious gramophone records can be bought for 70 kopecks or 1 ruble (75 to 90c). The performers are nearly all Soviet Russians: Richter, Gillels, Sofronitsky (piano), Oistrakh (violin), Rostropovich (cello). TV sets cost about the same as in the West. And there is something to be said for dull newspapers: the Russians are the world's greatest readers of books. In addition to the best Soviet books, they know their classics inside out: Pushkin, Gogol, Tolstoy, Turgenev, Dostoevsky, Chekhov and the rest. On the *Estonia* that brought me from Leningrad to Le Havre (a delightful journey I can strongly recommend to tourists) I talked to a sailor of 18 or 19. "Can you explain this to me?" he said. "It's very puzzling. I, and *all* of us, know not only our own classics but also some of the great writers of the West: Shakespeare, Balzac, Dickens, Stendhal, Scott. In the West, they don't seem to know anything. I asked some dockers at Tilbury which Shakespeare plays they liked best. 'Shakespeare—oh, the bloke who wrote plays. Never read any of them." And then I said: 'And Byron—do you like him?' 'Byron, who's he?' And the only books they have read were by somebody called James Bond. . . ."

Scars of Leningrad

I spent my last month in Russia in my adorable native city of Leningrad. In a way it is pathetic. It has become a provincial city, with only a small local paper, something you'd expect in Bridgeport or Montgomery. Here, the tragedy of the blockade, in which a million people died of hunger, is not forgotten. I again looked up my cousin Olga, a real heroine of the blockade who, as a doctor, accompanied first-aid teams to pick up people (many of them children) killed or wounded in the shelling of the city, and to search houses in an attempt to save children dying of cold and starvation. She saved dozens in this way. She had some of the most tragic war stories to tell:

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of how people ate their dogs, and of some who even tried to eat pieces of the dead bodies that were lying in all the streets at the height of the famine in the winter of 1941-42.

I had first looked her up in 1964. She is now an old-age pensioner, with 60 rubles a month, but still extremely active, looking after delinquent children. She had supreme contempt for her own family, well-to-do, middle-class people who had emigrated after the Revolution. "In 1918 I was a first-year medical student; and I said to my mother: this is *my* country and I am staying here and you can all go to hell."

Leningrad was full of tourists. My cousin was indifferent to the British and Americans, rather liked the French ("for we all respect de Gaulle"), thought it indecent of German tourists to come to Leningrad. Toward the end of the war she had been sent to a hospital for German war prisoners outside Leningrad. "I couldn't stand it for more than a day; I couldn't stop thinking of my starved and murdered Leningrad children. And I told the colonel. He said he understood, though it was professionally, he said, quite out of order. But he let me return to Leningrad all the same."

I had another encounter out of the past in Leningrad when I wrote an article for *Leningradskaya Pravda,* and received an immediate personal response. A classmate, now a venerable professor of English, whom I hadn't seen for nearly fifty years, turned up at my hotel, after asking the paper how to find me. We had a long talk. He had lived through the fifty years of the Soviet regime without any trouble, but told me of various classmates and of our history teacher, a Pole named Victorin Stvzeszkowski, who died of hunger in the Leningrad blockade. Then I said: "You knew I was in Moscow during the war—especially after my famous interview with Stalin in 1946. Why didn't you write?" "Oh, be your age," he said, "to write to a foreigner in the Stalin days was more than your life was worth." "But now?" "Oh now—now it's quite, *quite* different!"

A second phone call that same day reminded me tangibly of what the Stalin days were really like. "This is Maria Pavlenko. Does the name—my maiden name—mean anything to you?"

"Well, yes, I did have some second cousins of that name. . . ."

"Well, I *am* a second cousin of yours." She came to see me, a woman of 68, looking in reasonably good health. She was also quite elegantly dressed. Only, what a family story she had to tell! She had married a Pole in 1923 and they had had one son. In 1937, the Pole was arrested and shot as "an enemy of the people." Their 16-year-old boy, though a son of an "enemy of the people," had volunteered for the Red Army in 1941 and was soon killed. All her three brothers also died in the war. And she, herself? After the arrest of her husband, she had been deported to Siberia. Though not sent to a camp, she had lived in exile for twenty-five years. Not until 1962, when both her dead husband and she were officially "rehabilitated"—i.e., declared "not guilty"—was she allowed to return to her native Leningrad where she was now living on the very small pension of 40 rubles.

Yes, the Russia of Stalin and the Russia of today are two very different countries. As the Soviet jubilee budget shows, for the first time in the country's history the production of light industry, that is, consumer goods, will exceed that of heavy industry. Also, there have been sensational gains in this year of celebration in wages, pensions and hours of work. If it goes on like this, without a major war, Soviet Russia should be a remarkable country indeed on its sixtieth birthday!

AT&T: PART II

THE SOVEREIGN STATE OF BELL

NORMAN L. PARKS

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The Federal Communications Commission's investigation into the American Telephone and Telegraph Company is being conducted in two sets of hearings, of which only the first set is completed. Important matters of regulation —the corporate status of Western Electric, the manufacturing, repairing and purchasing arm of the Bell system, and AT&T's position in the competitive areas of communication—remain to be considered in the second phase of the hearing this fall, and undoubtedly the company views this coming round with foreboding. But it cannot be said that the monopoly came off badly in the phase just closed. However, in establishing the interstate rate base, the commission did make some findings and some reservations for future determination which could result in more effective intrastate regulation by commissions willing to take the bit in their teeth, and for the first time it did cut some sizable chunks of fat from the interstate toll rate base. The FCC eliminated from the rate base all plant under construction ($554 million)* and reserved for later consideration the inclusion of unpaid for capitalized purchases from Western Union ($56 million). It eliminated from working capital all funds not supplied by investors ($309.7 million), these being moneys from advance payments by customers and reserves for taxes. Reserved for later determination was the California commission's request that excess customer payments ($108

*But in September, the FCC reversed itself on this item, permitting plant under construction to remain in the rate base.

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million) be treated as negative working capital and deducted from the rate base.

That AT&T was flourishing on a bloated income is shown in the disallowance of more than $750 million in the interstate rate base of approximately $8 billion, and the reduction of the rate of return from an actual 8.56 per cent in 1966 to a proposed range of 7 to 7.5 per cent. The commission, in establishing a new "separations" formula for dividing plant cost, transferred $85 million from intrastate to interstate. The forthcoming reduction in interstate toll rates will not necessarily or even likely reduce dollar income, if the 1965 rate cut is a sound precedent. Though $100 million was whittled from the rate structure in that year, the reduction in rates, including the "after-nine" long distance rates, sent volume of calls soaring and net income rate to an all-time high.

How many states will push for a reduction of intrastate rates to reflect the $85 million transfer remains to be seen. Some will undoubtedly follow the lead of Tennessee, where Chairman Atkins announced that he was satisfied with the current structure. In any case, it will take considerable time to put any state reductions into effect. The political aspect of the separations procedure is seen in the willingness of Bell to accept shifts of capital to interstate operations, where because of technological innovations, costs are becoming dramatically lower. For example, a long distance microwave tower circuit costs only a tiny fraction of the investment required for an open-wire circuit. The capital transfer checks the great reductions possible in long distance rates and, since state regulation bodies are even less effective than the FCC, rates in both jurisdictions are sustained at high levels.

As important as the commission's actual orders was the progressive position it took on liberalized depreciation for tax purposes and the shifting of the capital structure of AT&T to a greater per cent of debt capital. While no requirement was exacted of management on these matters, vigorous state commissions will be encouraged to require both in establishing the intrastate rate base.

Though the midsummer interim decision went further than the stock market had anticipated, and though the Bell petition for reconsideration was draped in black, the prevailing reaction was that the great monopoly's health was unimpaired. Even *The Wall Street Journal* found little reason to scold. However, newspaper headlines did invite millions of telephone users to ask themselves how far the cultivated image of the company squared with reality.

All utilities spend lavishly to build favorable public images, but few have been as successful as AT&T. Phone bills are stuffed with lyric notices about how great and efficient is the telephone company, how devoted to the public service. Western Electric emerges as one of the world's wonders in mastery of technology and leadership in research. But every advertisement, every leaflet, every good-will contribution, every research project comes out of the pocket of either the subscribers or the taxpayer, the public being compelled to finance the molding of their own thinking.

No study has ever tried to measure this colossus of private socialism—which has never cut a dividend payment, not even in 1932, and which has operated for most of its life under its own synthetic system of law—against its public image. But there are reasons to believe that AT&T managers are perhaps no better than the policy makers in other combines, that its "efficiency" is rooted in monopoly power, technological mysteries and a maze of bookkeeping through which no regulatory body has ever found its way.

That the managers do have business feet of clay has lately been revealed in a starkly visible way. Through boom and depression the company has clung to a capital structure of roughly one-third debt and two-thirds equity. This ratio is normally reversed in most utilities. When it has been pointed out that a structure of fifty-fifty equity to debt would produce much lower telephone rates at no reduction in earning rate, the officials have always raised the ghost of another 1930 depression and a possible financial disaster for the company. The demand for telephone service is elastic, they contend, and a sudden reduction in public use could be a great threat to a company with a heavy debt.

After 1945, when the company could borrow huge sums at interest rates considerably under 4 per cent, it followed the policy of raising billions in new capital largely by selling stock and convertible debentures that required earning rates of 8 to 10 per cent. Moreover, the $15 billion in new capital raised in recent years came at excessively high cost through the issuance of "rights" to stockholders and the conversion of debentures into stock at below market prices. But now that interest rates have moved up substantially, the managers have announced a policy of increasing the debt ratio to 40 per cent, at which point consideration will be given for even more debt if the demand for new capital continues to mount.

When asked why they relied mostly on equity capital when interest rates were low, and now are beginning a shift to debt when interest rates are high, AT&T officials dismissed the question before the FCC as being "twenty-twenty hindsight." If so, it appears that the electric and gas utilities have enjoyed better foresight than the managers of the world's largest combine. To mold policy according to the experience of the Great Depression nearly a generation after that event is hardly financial statesmanship. To persist in the belief that capital risk in the telephone industry is higher than in any other natural monopoly, or that demand is more elastic, is to close one's eyes to the vast changes in American life since the era of *The Literary Digest*, when the number of telephone users did shrink to the privileged middle class. The social situation is radically different today. Even the unemployed feel that a telephone is essential for regaining employment, and the lower-middle class assumes that the telephone is a home necessity. Bell's own records show that demand has been remarkably firm on an upward moving line through each shift in the business curve since World War II.

No corporation in America is less vulnerable than the Bell system to the vagaries of the market. As the only

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supplier of its major plant needs and sole judge of its rate of replacement, it is practically unaffected by obsolescence, the great bugaboo of the competitive market. The switching equipment in the Nashville office, now two stages behind in technical development and fully depreciated twenty years ago, is still going strong after forty years. Sheer size gives AT&T an enormous advantage in the money market. Should its demands for equity capital begin to exhaust the interest of the buying public (it now accounts for 6 per cent of equity value on the stock exchange), there remains the great debenture market where its bonds are rated triple A. As a sheltered utility, its risks are far less than those of other industries. When it feels the profit pinch, it can and does appeal to the regulatory bodies, an avenue of relief not open to the average business.

Given these facts, company fiscal management appears timid, unimaginative, ultraconservative and overoriented to short-range investor interest. Such conspicuous shortcomings raise questions about the advertised masterminding in the areas of technology which lie outside the field of layman understanding. However, an examination of some of the rate hearings over the years by the few dynamic state commissions makes a strong case for the proposition that AT&T has made its way in part by bullying the regulatory bodies into letting it overcharge the American consumer.

The Bell system entered the post-World War II era with a frontal assault on forty-six jurisdictions for higher rates in connection with its huge expansion of service. The campaign was carefully worked out in New York and waged by the erudite and highly paid legal staff of the parent company. Cases were started simultaneously before the "push-over" commissions—the dozen or so that would be satisfied with cursory one-day hearings and immediate "findings" for the company. The legal team then moved from state to state where more elaborate presentations, supported by a mass of exhibits, were considered advisable, and where Bell-written decisions were provided for the commissions to release. Since such states were characterized by ineffective regulation, the monopoly was already receiving high returns in them. They thus provided themselves with an ever-mounting body of precedents to urge on the tougher commissions.

Such commissions were not the only targets of the grand strategy. It also included state courts, where the judges, themselves unlettered in rate making, would be likely to construe due process of law according to commission precedents established elsewhere. The latter phase of the campaign paid off handsomely in Tennessee, where a country club chancellor overruled the long, painstaking investigation and finding of the state commission and ordered a 20 per cent rate increase.

Tennessee's commission had the reputation in 1947 of being "tough" and was placed far down in the schedule of hearings. The "team" of eleven Bell system lawyers arrived in Nashville with more than two dozen triumphs in state capitals behind them. The hearings budget for the commission was a paltry $25,000—probably less than the retainer fee of a single company lawyer—and Commissioner Jourolmon had to restrict research to two or three areas of cost, including inflated investment during the test period and excessive reserves for pensions. The decision ruled that Southern Bell was already earning from 6 to 12 per cent, and was at least not entitled to a raise. The savings to state users amounted to $4 million before court intervention in 1948. Jourolmon resigned from the commission to serve as special assistant to a number of other states where the "team" also went down to defeat.

After the famous 1947 round, AT&T refined its techniques and now pursues them with even greater success. The New York lawyers are kept in the background and local talent makes the formal presentations. Universities, banks and investment houses are tapped for "expert" testimony. However, the data are centrally researched and company presentations appear as letter-perfect as a rehearsed Broadway production. In the area of public relations, seminars are sponsored for university personnel, Southern Bell alone having held twenty-six such gatherings in the past dozen years. The only serious setback in the ensuing years was at the hands of the California Commission in 1965, when Pacific Bell had its rates cut $41.7 million and was required to refund $83 million in overcharges to ratepayers.

Since these findings were sustained by the California Supreme Court, the charges of padding the rate base in at least fourteen areas of accounting at the expense of the consumers may be presumed to be valid. And since these involved intrastate cost-accounting procedures employed by all of the associated companies, a list of these is in order.

(1) Speculative Property Held for Future Use. The commission laconically observed that while some acquisitions for future installations are prudent, the company "should not be allowed to speculate in realty at the ratepayers' expense."

(2) Excessive Executive Salaries. Evidence showed that while Pacific reduced the number of its employees from 71,926 to 67,522 in a seven-year period, the number of executives at division level and above rose 66 per cent and salaries jumped 131 per cent! For rate purposes the bulk of the salary increase was disallowed.

(3) Padded Wage Expenses. For rate-base purposes, the company "folded back" into its wage costs for the entire year increases given only in the last four or five months. This amounted to $22.5 million more than was actually paid.

(4) Excessive Charges to Pensions and Employee Benefits Funds. By using an accrual basis for its pension system, Pacific was burdening the ratepayer with costs far in excess of actual needs. If Pacific had operated on a pay-as-you-go basis for fifty years, its pensions charges in the rate base would have been 60 per cent less in 1962 than under the accrual basis.

(5) Fees Charged Operating Companies by AT&T. Since the parent company owns all or almost all the stock of its operating companies, it is able to exact whatever terms it prescribes. One of them is a fee for "general services and licenses" to compensate for advice, assistance and services. Originally established at 4.5 per cent, the fee now collected is 1 per cent of operating revenues,

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subject to increase to 2.5 per cent without prior notice. This levy on Pacific in 1963 was $10.7 million. Why Pacific must look to American for advice and services which it should generate within its own vast corporate structure is a question that needs more exploration.

(6) Contributions Counted as Operating Costs. The operating companies impose all contributions on their ratepayers. AT&T in 1963 requested the FCC to make this standard practice in the prescribed accounting system, but the commission declined. Disallowing nearly a million dollars in gifts to colleges, United Givers Fund and other charities, the California commission advised Pacific that telephone users must be free to give or not, as they see fit, and the company would "not be permitted to be generous with ratepayers' money."

(7) Lobbying Charged as Cost. Similarly, the commission observed that Pacific was guilty of presumption in proposing "to determine without consent or prior knowledge of the ratepayers what pending legislation is or is not beneficial to them."

(8) Padded Western Electric Charges. Operating companies are under contract to purchase all equipment from or through Western Electric. Even hand tools and paper are supplied. All salvage, installation and repair work is also done through this wholly owned AT&T subsidiary. Western sets its own charges, which have reflected a 9.1 per cent profit over a fifty-year period. This is a massive return from a captive market, particularly in the case of a public utility. If 6.5 per cent is considered a fair rate of return, Western Electric has taken from the operating companies between $350 million and $400 million in excess profits since 1916. These excess charges have gone into the rate base and into depreciation expenses, the burdens being transferred to the telephone users. The California commission held that Western was entitled for rate purposes to no higher earning rate than that allowed Pacific (6.3 per cent), and it reduced charges and the rate base accordingly—a sum in excess of $20 million.

(9) Working Cash in Base Rate. The practice of including working cash not supplied by the stockholders in the total claimed for the rate base has been generally practiced by the Bell companies and has met the criticism of several commissions. Sources for working cash include employee taxes, reserves for corporation taxes and debenture interest, and advance collections from subscribers. The Florida commission disallowed most of this claim by Southern Bell in 1965, and the California commission found a gross of $27.6 million of Pacific's working cash not supplied by investors and therefore ineligible for inclusion in determining the average amount of working cash for the base rate.

(10) Padded Plant Cost. Some of the Bell company practices in ballooning the value of its plants for rate purposes are: the inclusion of plant under construction; year-end instead of average plant in service; conservative depreciation deductions (so-called "total-life" method); and refusal to use federally allowed accelerated depreciation for tax purposes. The California commission found a difference of more than $3 million in depreciation expense alone.

(11) Inflationary Tax Accounting. The Internal Revenue Service permits the twenty-two associated Bell companies to join in a consolidated return, thus freeing AT&T from the obligation of paying income tax on dividends received from its subsidiaries. By this means intra-corporate profiits of Western are also exempt. American acts as agent for the companies in paying the income tax, though the amounts forwarded by each to the holding company are determined on a separate basis. The total collected exceeds the amount due by the amount of the "phantom" tax of Western, this amount being rebated to the operating companies as they purchase plant equipment. However, the Bell accountants mark this refund as "deferred taxes" rather than a reduction on plant cost. Moreover, in the case of the usual state franchise tax, this method of accounting shifts to ratepayers the entire load of the state taxes on the parent company's operations. Few commissions have followed California's example in tangling with the giant on this bit of tax legerdemain.

(12) High Cost of Equity. Putting into practice the idea that "charity begins at home," American gives itself a bargain in associated company stock by having these companies pay AT&T for loans with stock priced far below market value. Where some stock is privately owned, the individual investor is rewarded on the same terms. Thus the 42,000 stockholders owning 10 per cent of Pacific's stock enjoy the pre-emptive right to buy stock, selling on the market for $27 a share, at the bargain price of $14.28 when a new offering is made. The ratepayers foot the bill for this windfall.

(13) Low Equity Ratio. The California commission found the actual equity-debt ratio of Pacific unfair to consumer interests and established the rate base on a hypothetical sixty-forty ratio, a practice which a number of other commissions have followed.

(14) Accounting Costs. In the early history of utility regulation, commissions were hard put to determine a realistic rate base because of loose accounting by the utilities. Assorted practices included imbedding good-will and franchise values in cost records, substituting reproduction cost for original cost, failing to record plant retirement, capitalizing operating costs, and watering stock. Whipped by legislative criticism, commissions have been important factors in bringing about better utility cost accounting.

Few of them have made a comprehensive examination of the Bell financial structure within their own state, and none have dealt with the combine as a whole. The most extensive investigation in recent years was the two-year study of Pacific by the California commission, which also examined the hearings in the eleven other states. The commission found Pacific's costs extensively padded and its earnings excessive. As a result, it cut the earnings rate back to 6.3 per cent.

While original cost has served as a theoretical base for thirty commissions, most of them have in practice allowed for inflationary pressures by various means, such as "attrition" (excessive wasting away of capital), price-level adjustment, "fair value" practices, and failure to allow adequately for future growth of revenue in setting the rate base.

The possibility that the FCC hearings might explore all the avenues opened by the California investigation understandably made AT&T's officials nervous. In this situa-

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tion an aggressive offense appeared to be the best defense. Some observers saw an indication of the new strategy in the elevation of an associated company official to executive vice president of AT&T to direct the drive. The central thesis of the campaign was that AT&T should have an earnings rate competitive with other corporations and this had to be in the upper range of 7.5 to 8.5 per cent on the total investment. As proof of its future competitive needs in the money market, the company cited the $4.2 billion allotted to plant investment in 1966. Though this huge cost was actually met out of retained earnings, depreciation and borrowing, the officials stressed the future need to resort to equity financing in huge sums. Higher earnings at once were held to be essential to protect the company's future market position—and, indeed, the economic health of the whole country, since AT&T accounted for 2 per cent of the gross national product. Under the 1944 *Hope Natural Gas* doctrine of the Supreme Court, a going-concern rate of 5 to 6.5 per cent is "reasonable and just." The campaign was therefore directed toward stamping out the long-established public impression that 6 per cent return is sound.

If the rate of return of 7 to 7.5 per cent set in the FCC order was, in the words of Chairman Romnes, "most disappointing," it appears historically to be reasonably generous. Indeed, it will probably be cited as a precedent against state commissions which hold earnings under a 7 per cent ceiling. Moreover, the FCC order puts no ceiling on equity earnings, which can rival that of the most prosperous competitive business if management resorts to more debt capital.

What troubles does the second phase of the FCC hearings hold for AT&T? The Western Electric enigma is up for examination, and it will be seen whether or not the commission dares to use its indirect powers to determine Western's "proper" place in the Bell family or to control its profit rate. Its popular reputation as a place of technological wizardry will also be examined. Consider the standard 500-model telephone, which was originally sold for $13.75 to the associated companies (and for $25 to the independents). Western has cut more than $3 from the cost of this mechanical device. Is this attributable primarily to its efficiency and unwillingness to coast on its privileged position, or does it lie largely in its monopoly role, the declining cost basis of production, and the fact that improvements in the unit produced no obsolescence? Neither the cost of improving the unit nor the reduction in price adversely affected Western's profit rate.

Presumably the matter of research already subsidized by the operating companies being paid for a second time in the price of Western's products will also be examined by the FCC.

A second important part of the upcoming hearings will focus on AT&T's entry into the competitive areas of communication, particularly the market for records communication, including data transmission, facsimile transmission and mixed voice and data transmission. In addition to these are the profitable TV and Comsat markets and the message telegraph service. At the instance of the Common Carriers Bureau, the corporation was required to submit in 1965 a study of its seven categories of interstate communication service on a totally embedded cost basis, rather than on an incremental cost basis, whereby a new activity is charged with only its additional costs and does not share in the overhead of the whole enterprise. The results showed net earnings as follows: message toll telephone 10 per cent, wide area service 10.2 per cent, private line 4.7 per cent, teletypewriter 2.9 per cent, telegraph 1.4 per cent, television .9 per cent, and TELPAK .3 per cent. This data seemed to mean that the toll telephone subscribers were being taxed to subsidize the services of Bell in the competitive areas, with both the public and such competition as Western Union being the victims. Bell contends that the allocated cost basis is unfair, and that five of the seven categories should be evaluated on an incremental cost basis, a concept picked up from theoretical economics. The FCC inquiry has asked whether such a theoretical concept as incremental cost is applicable to a monopoly subject to regulatory policies rooted not only in the cost-earnings concept but also in widely accepted social and governmental goals.

The company views the examination of the Seven Way Cost Study with concern because it looks to the newer areas of communication for its major growth and profit in the future. The traditional telephone field has grown dramatically since 1945 and still far exceeds the growth rate of the gross national product. However, Bell officials freely predict that telephone service is fast approaching saturation. Thereafter, Bell's growth would tend to match population and GNP percentages. On the other hand, the newer activities offer dazzling vistas of empire building that would require vast investments of new capital. Until their dreams become reality, the managers prefer to treat these activities as fringe operations set up on an incremental cost basis, an accounting device which to the critics has all of the earmarks of pure subsidization. A fascinating avenue of inquiry would be at what point on the profit scale of monopoly does incremental cost of an activity like data transmission cease to be "incremental" and become "imbedded"?

Clearly the second phase of the hearings could create policy of immense importance for both the Bell system and the general public, but past performances in the regulation field do not raise sanguine hopes. Up to the present, the whole communications industry has had little effective regulation, and one must question whether it is possible to begin now. Most Americans perforce accept the emergence of a private corporate giant as a sharer of government, and trust their fate to the sense of public responsibility which its managers may or may not possess, but over whom in either case they have no effective control. Few can question the caliber of men the Bell system recruits. Those who get to the top are conditioned to believe so implicitly in the way the company sets up its costs and rates that they cannot conceive of any other approach to effective telephone operation. Those who doubt do not get to the top. These officials impress one as being not only able but honest and truthful in the normal sense. They embrace, emotionally at least, the new gospel that a business is not to be administered solely by the

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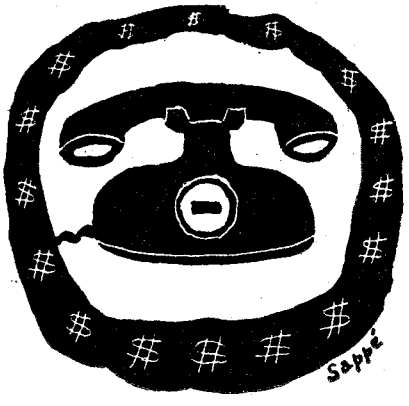
standards of profit and productivity, that the manager is "neither managing men nor managing work . . . he is administering a social system."

That they have also taken good care of the economic health of Bell cannot be doubted. The value of its stock has doubled in the past decade. If the recent FCC ruling has reduced its speculative attraction, it remains one of the most solid of the blue-chip combines. In spite of heavy transfer of plant costs from intrastate to interstate base in 1965, the rate of return on its interstate operations rose to 8.01 per cent in 1966 and stood at 8.56 per cent by the opening of 1967. The projection of return on the present basis indicates an annual rise of 1.11 per cent for the years ahead. Obviously if such productivity were not funneled off in lower telephone rates by firm regulation, it would make mockery of the whole concept of "public utility" and the theory that a monopoly's plant is dedicated to the public use.

A fundamental error of orthodox economics is the effort to fit such giants as American into the traditional market formulas. As John K. Galbraith points out in his newest book, *The New Industrial State,* these giants are self-contained social institutions. The AT&T managers are not capitalists but an association of power men caught up in a highly intricate and vastly impersonal organization aiming at distinctive corporate goals. No corporation has achieved so complete an integration of its managerial class into its corporate structure as has AT&T—so complete, indeed, that the outsider viewing its managers' high morale, complete dedication and single-mindedness is tempted to speak of them as "brainwashed."

Because of its massive size and spread and its close integration into the functioning of government and society, the Bell system performs a function of the state and substitutes for state action. In this capacity public service should be the guide; the incentive to management in such a case must be a job well done and a public service met.

The fundamental issue at stake in the current hearing is not the "goodness" or "badness" of AT&T, either as to structure or management. Its peculiar structure is due to the American federal system of government, and the indifferent regulation of this unitary empire may be attributed in part to the divided responsibility for regulation. Its management is certainly dynamic and able. There may be ground rules for regulation within which the company has voluntarily operated, but as Chairman Henry admitted, "they have never been developed by a public hearing." Certainly there is no overall policy covering the shape and structure of the communications industry and meaningful rationale of regulation. Probably it will take both Congress and the FCC to supply these. The chief opportunity and responsibility at this time belong to the commission. It is impossible to believe that a democracy will remain content with a regulatory body that does not regulate and a private empire operating under its own prescribed order.



A Voice for the Voiceless

(Continued from page 421)

tens of thousands of freedom-loving Vietnamese" and "letting all of Asia fall prey to the murdering pillage of the modern hordes of a Ghengis Khan of Red China." The proposition, it was said, "will receive the vote of every Communist, every pro-Communist . . . [while] Communism is spreading through our universities to contaminate the minds of our youth through drugs. . . ." From Vietnam to Berkeley, it's all one great Communist plot.

Nightstick Politics

Earlier this month, fifteen weeks after the event, the City Council of Los Angeles began an inquiry into the violence that attended President Johnson's visit to the city on June 23. Sworn witnesses, among them the wife of an aircraft company executive, a department chairman at UCLA and a television producer, described the sudden assault by 1,500 police upon a crowd of 10,000 to 15,000 persons gathered in front of the Century Plaza Hotel to protest the war in Vietnam. A policeman struck the woman on the head, and another officer jabbed her 4-year-old crippled daughter in the back with a nightstick after the child had fallen to the street. Blocks away from the hotel, a policeman struck the UCLA professor in the back, and a half-dozen officers in the same area surrounded and clubbed a teen-age boy who sat in the street and offered no resistance.

These instances, and many more, of unprovoked police brutality were not news. They had been well documented before. What came out of the inquiry was evidence that the violence was necessary neither to control or disperse the crowd nor to protect the President. The assembly was a peaceful political act intended to impress the President of the United States with the anti-war feeling of the demonstrators. The authoritarian response was the political use of police power to impress the crowd that the nightstick is more efficacious in Los Angeles than the Bill of Rights.

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BOOKS & THE ARTS

The Old Jew in New Times

THE MANOR. *By Isaac Bashevis Singer. Farrar, Straus & Giroux. 442 pp. $6.95.*

THE FAMILY MOSKAT. *By Isaac Bashevis Singer. Farrar, Straus & Giroux. 611 pp. $5.95.*

YOSHE KALB. *By I. J. Singer. Harper & Row. 246 pp. $4.95.*

AN ANTHOLOGY OF MODERN YIDDISH POETRY. *Selected and translated by Ruth Whitman. October House. 141 pp. $7.50.*

JULES CHAMETZKY

Mr. Chametzky is associate professor of English at the University of Massachusetts and editor of The Massachusetts Review. *Mr. Chametzky's essay deals with a special aspect of our discussion of the current novel in the United States, a novel about Jewish life, written in Yiddish and widely read in English translation.*

Isaac Bashevis Singer's new novel, *The Manor,* although complete in itself and running to well over 400 pages, is only Part I of a saga—Part II is in preparation for the English-reading audience—that will chronicle the years between the unsuccessful Polish insurrection of 1863 (which marked Poland's emergence as an industrial nation) and the opening of the present century. *The Family Moskat,* Singer's first epic novel, published in 1950 and reissued in 1965 by his new publishers, begins around 1900 and carries the story of Polish Jewry up to the point of its destruction by Hitler.

In these novels of broad scope, Singer displays his ability as a socially realistic novelist, a side of his talent that some may not find as congenial as that other Singer of demons, psychological analysis, existential probing (as in, say, *The Magician of Lublin,* about which more later). Granted that this is a tradition with a distinguished lineage—Balzac, Tolstoy, et al.—surely it is rather old-fashioned. Who now (among serious critics) reads Sholem Asch's *Three Cities* or I. J. Singer's *The Brothers Ashkenazi?*

Two years ago *Harper's* published a new edition of I. J. Singer's *Yoshe Kalb,* an effort, no doubt, to capitalize on the interest in the younger brother's work and perhaps in Yiddish literature generally. The reappearance of this tale, a great success when it first appeared in the *New York Jewish Daily Forward* more than thirty years ago and a favorite among Yiddish readers and audiences ever since, does point up certain differences in the two brothers. I. J. Singer was basically a realist who thoroughly researched his subject in *Yoshe Kalb,* in the process warming to but not quite knowing what to make of its mythic qualities. What he made was a melodrama.

There are fine things in the book: a wonderfully satiric portrait of narrow and superstitious *shtetl* life that is a good antidote to current sentimentalization of that life, while still doing justice to its Breughel-like vitality. He does not spare anything in exposing the stupidity and selfishness of many of the Chassidic Jews through whom the lurid tale of sin and expiation unfolds, yet he manages to suggest the Divinity in them. But the whole tale, of the tragic rabbi's son—with its childbirth deaths, synagogues burning against the night sky, graveyard and deathbed sequences—is terribly dated.

The image of I. J. Singer that stays with me is from a photograph in a book of his memoirs showing him with cane and Homburg, a proud Warsaw dandy, standing in the mud among gross-booted Jewish wagoners. He was there all right, but the distance he came is all too clear. Isaac Bashevis said of his brother that he was, "a modern man, [who] had all the great qualities of our pious ancestors." That is true enough, but the implied duality holds even truer for Isaac Bashevis Singer. What makes the critical difference for us, today, in his work, what makes it so surprising and readable, is his ability to hold both these elements in a state of creative tension.

As a reading of *In My Father's House,* Singer's recent memoir, shows, he seems perfectly poised between the two great examples of his life: the father, a Chassidic rabbi steeped in the old pieties, serene and scholarly, while all around him abominations were being committed; and the older brother, an enlightened young skeptic, Socialist, frequenter of Warsaw artists' ateliers. The world presents itself to I. B. Singer in this dual aspect: rich and various, sensuous and attractive; yet withal *tref,* perhaps ultimately an illusion.

It means, finally, that I. B. Singer's work resists being easily categorized. As his means of depicting Poland as it emerged from 1863 into the modern world of commerce, industry, scientism and skepticism, Singer focuses in *The Manor* upon the changing fortunes of Calman Jacoby and his family. Jacoby, a poor and pious Jew, senses the direction events are to take and after winning a concession to develop an exiled count's lands, through honesty, hard work, intelligence, he quickly prospers. But the life of new worldliness that follows is a mixed blessing: he sees one daughter become apostate and marry the psychopathic son of the old count; upon the death of his faithful and pious wife, he marries Clara, who is wanton, worldly, a misery to him; to his increasing bewilderment, the world's good opinion of him changes to envy and malice, his old self-assurance is replaced by anxiety and dissatisfaction—his daily life a living hell. "The more Calman thought about it, the more he came to believe that he was the captive and not the master of his fortune."

In the modern world, a settled, ordered existence is impossible; Andrew Lytle, Allen Tate, all of us, would understand this criticism of change and modernity. This commonplace becomes crushing in its implications when we recall where we are in the world of the novel. Upon his return from exile, Count Jampolski, despairing of Poland's futile sentimentality, speaks to his daughter about the need to enter the modern world: "Smokestacks are what we need in Poland, towering smokestacks spewing smoke." Of course we know that this century brought the ultimate smokestacks spewing smoke to Poland.

Is it fair, however, to lay the blame for the final horror upon the modern world (and not just the Germans and their accomplices)—to indict by suggestion the whole business from Blake's satanic mills to the rise of positivism and the death of God? It is a familiar indictment, probably too pat, yet certainly in view of the modern disaster (and no end in sight) nonetheless persuasive. Singer's modern side lies in his ability to show that the alternatives, once the machinery of modernism was set in motion, were not wholly real or even serious.

Calman Jacoby goes on retreat to a Chassidic court and revels in his seat at the table of the wonder-working rabbi. This is heaven, he thinks; that other world he came from is hell. There is joy, beauty, light here—yet the rabbi

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very likely was a genial and pious fraud, the Chassidic court rent with intrigues, the hangers-on fools (as Calman's enlightened and sympathetically portrayed son-in-law knows). Further, the peace he finds at the home of his traditionally pious, *shtetl*-oriented daughter is short-lived, for Calman, like all of us, tires of all that ease and *haimishkeit* and yearns to get back to the work of the world.

What sustains Singer in a duality that could reduce a lesser writer to silence or incoherence is his absolute Jewishness. This has been said before and does not need to be belabored. It provides him with a unique perspective—writing as a Jew, he can show convincingly how Wallenberg, the rich convert in *The Manor*, remains a Jew despite all; or convince us that Miriam Liebe, Calman's apostate daughter, will suffer horribly in her life and will also slip a *shamus* half a franc to light a candle for her soul.

More important than this uniqueness of tone and perspective, it provides Singer with some firm moral ground in an otherwise fluid situation. For example, it can be demonstrated that one of the organizing devices of *The Manor* is to show how one by one the Mosaic Ten Commandments are broken by Jews under the impact of the modern world. I think Singer means this to be taken literally: shaken loose from traditional values, there are Jews in the novel who take the name of the Lord in vain, worship graven images, commit adultery, etc. Each violation seems to lead inevitably to another—much as medieval Catholics believed that in one sin all were apprehended.

There is an important exception, however, for Singer: in *The Manor*, at least in Part I, no Jew kills. The withholding of this ultimate abomination and reduction of man to a thing is significant. There is a murder in the book, and it is committed by the sick son of Count Jampolski. When Calman Jacoby feels murderous towards his deceitful wife, he puts her aside, he does not put her to death. Life in all its ambiguity is sacred to the Jew, a value that comes as a saving grace to Singer as novelist. He can love and write about the various forms of life in his Jews—convert and con man, demonized and saintly—even as his work suggests that it may all come to nothing in the end, or that there is finally no transcending the inexorability of history.

That portion of *The Manor* that we have here ends with Calman Jacoby in retreat from the modern world, praying and studying in the makeshift synagogue he had built on his land, dreaming of the old patriarchs, feeling protected among the sacred books and in the belief that "in this place, God watched over him." This ending is not unlike that of *The Magician of Lublin*, in which Yasha Mazur, as modern as a character out of Dostoevsky or an existential novel—restless, bored, contradictory in thought and impulse, skeptical, amoral, player at being God—witnesses the collapse of all his plans, and finds that all his intricate relationships lead to lechery, death, despair. In this he sees the hand of God and is transformed in the book's epilogue to Reb Jacob the Penitent. He turns from the world and its affairs, goes back to his Orthodox wife, grows a beard and side locks, wears the traditional old clothes, locks himself into a small house where he will end his days in prayer, penance, meditation. He earns a reputation as a rabbi and saint, and has presumably known God.

What are we to make of all that? Is Singer suggesting in this thread that runs between two so apparently dissimilar books that only a return to orthodoxy and tradition can save us from the modern dilemma? As one would say in the best Talmudic fashion, on the one hand yes, and on the other no. Much as his heart goes out to that position (as evidenced in many of the loveliest parts of his work), Singer's intelligence and perception force him to recognize that it too may be a cruel illusion. If modern ideas are nullified by the Polish smokestacks, so too, then, are the traditional values.

It may be misleading to refer back to *The Family Moskat* for light upon Singer's subsequent work and thought. After all, it was written almost twenty years ago, when the despair of the holocaust was painfully fresh; there is also the fact that the characters in the chronicle of the family Jacoby are different (at least in name) from those in the prior book and may be fairly considered a fresh start. Yet even if the recent republication of *The Family Moskat* did not inevitably place its significance for Singer's whole body of work before us, then its power certainly would. What I have specifically in mind, since I have dealt with two other endings, is the conclusion of *The Family Moskat;* that is, the end, chronologically if not in terms of his own composition, of the saga of Polish Jewry. In that ending, Singer thoroughly undercuts the most hallowed of Jewish traditions.

In the very last lines of that book, when the Nazis are on the way to Warsaw, one heartbroken Jew says to another, "The Messiah will come soon." When this declaration is met with astonishment by the other (a modern man), the explanation that provides the last word in the book is quickly given: "Death is the Messiah. That's the real truth."

If Singer employs an old-fashioned realistic method in his story of Polish Jewry, then it is a realism about life that recognizes hidden depths of paradox—and so is of a piece with the rest of his work. In all of Singer's work I find a profound sense, by implication, of the contemporary void—one that begins at the moment of recognition noted above—and a bodying forth of the knowledge that its negotiation requires the most delicate, and perilous, balance between worlds lost and found, known and unknown.

A note on translations: Kenneth Rexroth has said of Isaac Bashevis Singer that "if only he were left writing in Yiddish, it would still be an important literary language." I think that is quite right; meanwhile we are served incredibly well by his excellent translators, his nephew Joseph Singer and Elaine Gottlieb (wife of the late Cecil Hemley, to whom much credit is due for his efforts at putting Singer before a wide public, and who was himself a fine

AVE MARIA

Mary, so full of calmness
—Hello.
With you, this place up to its high vault is familiar as my pillow.
This is a Palace of Rest,
and all my freakishness has disappeared now like yesterday.
And how sweetly you're staring down as if roses grew on the floor!

Here, catch this flower;
it's my lovely Civility!
You are, I tell you, with always young eyes and your many years,
like no one else.

I saw your son on a high school track today.
His nearly hairless, white, muscular legs were keeping him ahead of
his disciples. . . .

ALLAN KAPLAN

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writer and translator of Singer). We may yet find that more than the existence of I. B. Singer (for which the Lord be praised!) will justify the study of Yiddish as a literary language. Various selections in *An Anthology of Modern Yiddish Poetry,* edited and translated by Ruth Whitman, can convince one that more treasures await discovery. The edition is bilingual, Miss Whitman a first-rate poet in her own right and a gifted translator (of modern French and Greek poetry, as well as of some Singer stories). Most of the poets included are alive, happily, but old—and thereby hangs the tale.

Toward Celebration

MEDICAL AID AND OTHER POEMS. *By Donald Jones. The University of Nebraska Press. 69 pp. $3.50.*

ROLFE HUMPHRIES

The Collected Poems of Rolfe Humphries *was published in 1965 by Indiana University Press. Mr. Humphries is retired from the faculty of Amherst College and now lives in California.*

An unusual title, surely, for a first book by a young poet who wrote most of these poems between the ages of 19 and 28. Not a very inviting one, either; we suspect one of those "how I suffer!" deals, with special dwelling in, and on, the psychiatric abode. No such thing, it turns out; each of the eighteen poems in the *Medical Aid* group, Mr. Jones tells us, "arose from the claims or real welfare clients for cold cash, health, and human dignity. . . . Though the names of the clients are changed, the facts given are strictly accurate and should prove reliable and useful for political reform." Whether the clients in the poems are single individuals, or composites, as one poem suggests, most of them are decent and dignified people; one or two may be dubious cases; perhaps one or two are chiselers. They are all treated in these poems with respect and compassion, with quick insight, without sentimentality, with few words, without bureaucratic balderdash or form-filling folderol. Dare we hope that political reform will ever achieve as much?

The same lack of excess is found in most of the other poems; though rather curiously, sometimes too much invades the very short poem with the very short line. For example, it seems to me that the last stanza of "Labyrinth" cannot sustain all the D and related N sounds in its twenty syllables, or six rhymes (if you count one unstressed syllable) on *thread.* The same criticism, in a general way, applies to a much longer poem, "On First Looking into Dr. Berne's *Games People Play,*" where only two rhymes, on *gets* and *shame,* with *game* repeated as a refrain word at the end of each stanza, run through a poem of fifty dimeter lines. This might work if the line were longer, or the intent more obviously zip-zip comical. But look at "Sing a Song of No Cents":

> *To the stern police*
> *of Calvinsburg*
> *where fists are tight*
> *and burglars wander*
>
> *some burgher reported*
> *the crickets who squander*
> *their art on the night,*
> *disturbing the peace.*

Here the poet is operating very deftly indeed, featly moving between masculine and feminine rhyme, rhyme delayed, rhyme or assonance internal, rhyme denied. This is a big-league performance. As they say of a good pitcher, "Watch him move that ball around!"

This young poet knows a good deal about off-rhyme, though not quite so much about assonance (which is considerably harder to manage). The beat is firm; the line is, usually, the unit it should be, without that silly-fashion nonsense where *the* is the last word of a stanza. He tends to be a little overcommitted to his initial stress patterns; once an iamb, always an iamb; once a 4/4 bar, always four quarter notes, with never a half note played off against a few sixteenthers. In particular, he might learn more about the pause, the rest, and about varying the line length. I'd like to see him try working, for a while, with the longer line. He has shown in this collection in "Winter of the Social Body," in "A View of Baltimore," in "An Interior Mosaic of the Bishops City," in "Ronsard's 'Hélène'," what he might do with a more sensuous musical quality and with more room to enrich the epithet, also, of the poem. There is, as well, some danger of the monotony-monogamy of one-adjective-one-noun combinations. I note, in nine lines, "subtle cells," "brown-husked Church," "Flowing honey," "dappled day," "twisted cables," "smouldering skies," "thickest shadow," "radiant spirals," "brown eyes." Not a question, here, as to whether the diction is good or bad, but whether the pattern gets too hypnotic. "My recent verse," Jones advises us, "seems turning toward the West, the plain talltale, and the sacred-profane, as in 'Wild West Christmas,' a story after a friend's recurring nightmare." He hopes, he tells us, that his future poems may move from commemoration to celebration. *Ruehmen, das ist's,* said Rainer Maria Rilke. I think Jones knows this. Wherever he finds his future material, Jones may feel assured of a very sound performance in this first collection; he has rejected a great deal of the nonsense of contemporary fashion; he has an ear, a mind and a heart.

May I conclude on a personal aside to the author? Thank you very much for your memorial tribute to Les Lindou.

THEATRE

HAROLD CLURMAN

At the New Theatre on East 54th Street, Bruce Jay Friedman's *Scuba Duba* is f-u-n-n-y. It is also funny.

I find it difficult to fathom my own reaction beyond the cachinnation which the initial contact with the play produced in me. My funny bone had been struck a considerable whack but I could not make out the exact nature of the effect beyond its immediate physical manifestation. There is laughter and laughter, and though the theatregoer in need of pastime may be entirely satisfied when his risibilities have been aroused, the critic should not content himself with the mere notation of the fact.

In spelling out the key word above I mean to indicate the unease I experienced as I laughed. There was something sad about the play which Peter Larkin's pretty set, the vulgarity of the language, the blatant jokes, the general extravagance of the proceedings did not efface. My head had been hammered, yet I was left with a hole in my heart.

Stripped of theatrical embellishments (Jacques Levy's production is most apt) the play's plot makes a clear point. Harold Wonder, a young New Yorker on his vacation on the Riviera with his wife and two children, strongly suspects that she has run off with a black scuba diver. Frantic with anxiety, Harold spills his troubles out on Miss Janus, a marvelously stacked American neighbor who comes in to visit him in a bikini. He has no eye for her readily available blandishments though he puts up with her simple-mindedness.

He makes an overseas call to his mother, whose consolation consists of a combination of vomitous bromides and

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aggression. He summons his psychoanalyst, who arrives with Cheyenne, a middle-aged floozy of shameless candor. The doctor's ministrations may be summed up as a kind of Zen double-talk which drives Harold to the verge of violence. Unable to calm Harold, the analyst takes Cheyenne to bed.

Then Harold's wife, Jean, makes an appearance with her skin diver friend, a clownish black named Foxtrot, out of a mental Disneyland accoutered in the painful tale wrested from the author's devilish paraphernalia of his profession. But Jean is not sleeping with him. Her lover is Reddington, a suave coffee-colored Negro of a very rational demeanor.

Jean tells Harold that he lacks continental delicacy or seductive finesse (she succumbs to his advances only in the bathroom) and that she must leave him. Reddington tries to appease Harold's bewildered fury with the admonition that he ought to accept the situation with civilized poise. At this point Harold goes berserk, strikes the solar plexus of an intruding bore of a tourist, and is ultimately left alone with the children. Though Miss Janus, the receptive lady of appetizing contours invites him to join her in a party at her place, Harold still hankers after his coldly obtuse wife at whom he howls his perennial passion.

In all the simplicity of his soul he doesn't want the dumb siren he can have, only the dumb wife he can't. Pathetic. One surmises that this is not an objective story told for fun but a subjectively painful tale wrested from the author's hectic experience! But it's nuts, and he tells it in maniacal self-derision.

The play is written and directed in a style that might be set down as that of the old *Esquire* and the new *Playboy* blue joke cartoons, raw in color, jocular in design. There are little side dishes. First there is a French cop who, instead of arresting a lunatic "anarchist" who nightly robs Harold's house, bawls Harold out for being an American and thus an imposter. (The cop concludes the scene by leading the foreigners in the *Marseillaise*.) Then there is the house agent who insists that all of her tenants are famous movie stars (she takes Foxtrot for Sidney Poitier) and acts the *femme fatale* with every male she encounters. The show's every detail is kooky.

But it is not any falsity I fear in this shebang, not the stylization but the verisimilitude. This is not satire, it is naturalism! It is also "nihilism." What Friedman, willy-nilly, is telling us from the frazzled deeps of his being is that he, they, *we* are all living in a loony bin in which anything goes, and that there's no use feeling anything about it since nothing is what it seems or is given

50th Anniversary of the Russian Revolution

THE HISTORY OF THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION, Leon Trotsky, translated by Max Eastman
Trotsky tells "how the revolution is prepared, how it develops, and how it conquers" in a reissue of one of the most important books of the century. **$14.50**

PAUL MILIUKOV: POLITICAL MEMOIRS 1905-1917, edited by Arthur P. Mendel
Paul Miliukov, acknowledged leader of the Russian liberals before the Bolshevik revolution, gives a comprehensive account of their struggle to establish a representative Russian government. **$9.75**

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Angelica Balabanoff was one of Lenin's close friends and confidants until she broke with his regime. This book presents her memories of the man and the revolution he led. **$5.00**

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This book examines the evolution of Marxist-Leninist philosophy. It provides the basis for understanding present-day Soviet policies and developments that will mold the future course of Russia. **$6.95**

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The stories of one of the 20th century's great satirists, who was banned from the Russian press as a "literary tramp," give a hilarious look at life in the Soviet Union. **$5.95**

DOKTOR ZHIVAGO, Boris Pasternak
This is the revised text, in Russian, of Pasternak's great novel which has been published in nearly every language of the civilized world. **$7.50**

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Five Late Poems by Miklos Radnoti

Two years after he was shot in 1944, the body of the Hungarian poet, Miklós Radnóti, was found in a mass grave at Abda. In the pocket of his coat his wife discovered a group of his poems (called "Postcards"—three of which are given below) which constitutes a record of his last days during a long forced march. The place names and dates of the poems indicate the line of march before its termination in Abda, where no longer useful as laborers to the retreating Nazi army, the prisoners were shot.

Miklós Radnóti published eight books of poetry; the last, *Cloudy Sky*, appeared posthumously in 1946 in Hungary. All of *Cloudy Sky* and about seventy-five poems from his other works are being jointly translated by the three poets named at right. The work is proceeding under a grant from the National Translation Center.

Translated by Stephen Polgar, Stephen Berg and S. J. Marks

NIGHT

The heart sleeps, and fear sleeps in the heart.
The fly sleeps near the cobweb on the wall.
It is quiet in the house,
the wakeful mouse is quiet,
the garden sleeps, the branch,
the woodpecker in the tree,
the bee in the hive, the chafer in the rose.
Summer sleeps in the spinning grains of wheat,
fire sleeps in the moon,
there is a cold medal on the sky.
Autumn wakes. It goes off stealing in the night.

June 1, 1942

IN HIDING

I look at the mountain from the window.
It does not see me.
I hide, I write a poem,
not that it matters,
and I see the old grace. It is useless.
As before, the moon cuts into the sky
and the cherry opens.

May 9, 1944

POSTCARD

Nine miles from here
the haystacks and houses burn,
and on the edges of the meadow
there are quiet frightened peasants, smoking.
The little shepherd girl seems
to step into the lake, the water ripples.
The ruffled sheepfold
bends to the clouds and drinks.

Cservenka, October 6, 1944

POSTCARD

Bloody drool hangs on the mouths of the oxen.
The men all piss red.
The company stands around in stinking wild knots.
Death blows overhead, disgusting.

Mohács, October 24, 1944

POSTCARD

I fell next to him. His body rolled over.
It was tight as a string before it snaps.
Shot in the back of the head—"This is how
you'll end." "Just lie quietly," I said to myself.
Patience flowers into death now.
"Der springt noch auf", I heard above me.
Dark filthy blood was drying on my ear.

Szentkirályszabadja, October 31, 1944

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out to be. We are puppets playing unbalanced games on a freak stage.

When Harold attacks his wife's companions in the insulting lingo of the gutter he is altogether innocent of any racial slur; he is simply reacting to the turmoil of his cracked brain in which nothing is firmly established or substantial. He is a hobgoblin with straw stuffing where the organs of intelligence and emotion are supposed to dwell. Only enough of the original human is retained to emit squeaks and squawks of distress which remind us of the removed parts.

When a Russian long ago wrote such a play (on another level, with a different motivation) he ended by having an actor turn to the audience and cry out: "What are you laughing about, this is you!" We guffaw unabashed: we don't care.

Am I taking *Scuba Duba* too seriously? As I indicated at the outset, I too was jostled into mirth by this uproariously declarative farce. It is a thing typical of contemporary America: spontaneous in a forthrightness whereby the author strips himself and us of all phony pretense of decorum or cultivation. I too admired the free-swinging skill of the presentation, but I left the theatre with a slight ache. The play is more depressing in its hilarity than *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* in its drama, more devastating in its zaniness than Pinter in his constriction. What troubles me is that so few recognize this.

As Harold Wonder, Jerry Orbach excels because his funny stuff is solidly founded on the *sincerity* which the character must have, and which is at the base of Friedman's inspiration. Brenda Smiley's figure commands our scrupulous attention and she has been admirably directed to give Miss Janus the right touch of amiable nitwittedness. Rita Karin is killingly idiotic as the come hither, hip-swaying French housekeeper. Ken Olfson has the suitably glazed solemnity as the head shrinker who recommends that Harold see life "sideways." And Cleavon Little makes a fantastic and agile sprite of Foxtrot. There are a few forced notes and one somewhat dull spot, but everyone plays in pitch.

Since early September I have witnessed a number of stage events which I have failed to report and to some of which I may give fuller attention at a later date. Here in the meantime are fleeting notes.

The Joffrey Ballet, a youthfully pleasing and expert company, delighted me in *Cello Concerto* to Vivaldi's score, and intrigued me in the mixed media tribute to *Astarte*.

Judy Garland with some vocal insecurity in the lower register still touches me deeply. She is incapable of making a graceless movement. Her dramatic instinct is faultless; her every gesture suggests a large area of never wholly realized power. But this very lack of completeness is somehow moving, draws us closer to her.

Marlene Dietrich, pearl-visaged, streamlined phoenix, deserves extended commentary. Do not inquire about her voice or delivery. It is the person herself with her staunch wistfulness, her eyes which gaze at us from the hazy corridors of the past, that matters. She is courteous and aloof; there is a gravity about her now that has little to do with the naughty froufrou of the old days. For all the exquisite flamboyance of her dress, the total impression is of an imperiousness to which one gladly gives obeisance.

After the Rain by John Bowen (Golden Theatre) is a play of so-called ideas. It is a bloodless parable about the rise and hollowness of dictatorship. I did not mind its didacticism but I was anaesthetized by its banality.

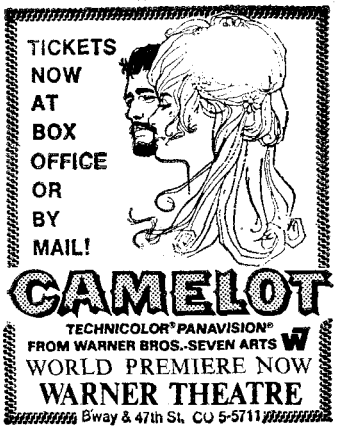
At the Lyceum, Max Adrian offers a one-man show, *By George* (Bernard Shaw). The actor's speech is distinct—the hint of brogue in the accent brings out the element of Irish blarney in the master's prose—and his effort is valiant. The selection of material offers us only a tracing of Shaw's career, but even a little of his language and spirit does much to compensate for Broadway's brazenness.

ART

MAX KOZLOFF

By coincidence, the most fascinating exhibition in Paris last summer, a collection of primitive art in artists' collections at the Musée de l'Homme, offers parallels with "The Sculpture of Picasso," the show that has just opened with great fanfare at the Museum of Modern Art. Simply as a demonstration of taste, particularly among the Surrealists, the Paris event was a revelation of how far the genuinely primitive, in the shape of frightening fetishes and totems, has come to look handsomely decorative. The works that Picasso and Braque collected earlier were more schematic and less potent examples of their kind, but one had the impression that for their owners they opened up a world of such forcefully broken and blunt forms that, in comparison, all later views of the primitive seem a bit housebroken. The difference of perspective lay, I think, in the inductive Cubist sense of reconstruction on the one hand, and the Surrealist wonder at magic objects on the other. One approach stressed an involvement with artistic process; the other, a contemplation of icons and images. The paradox is that, however much primitive savagery was sophisticatedly appreciated by the Surrealists, the Cubists, interested only in their own cultural norms, produced work whose effect was much closer to the spirit of their tribal models. In Surrealist art, the specter of the primitive takes on all the resonance of the neurotic and the irrational; in Cubism, it becomes an upheaval of rhythms, primordial even in their control.

That this had been one of the chief characteristics of Picasso's painting we have long known. That it has even more powerfully marked his sculpture we can clearly see in this retrospective, which



In this witty, incisive memoir (replete with tales of the famous and notorious on the intellectual, political, and business fronts of the '30s), a wide-ranging nonconformist remembers it all as it really was—the Crash and the robber barons, the New Deal, and new morals, the men and burning issues in the incredible decade from that black day in October 1929 to World War II, the decade that changed the face and the fortunes of America forever.

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he has for the first time permitted, on the occasion of his 85th birthday. If anything, his sculpture, not only because it is in the same art form as are the primitive examples but because it is tangible, allude to their animating force more authentically. Still, Picasso is no less a man of the West, and if he has seen in their rigid sculptural codes possibilities of expressive distortion, and in their fixed symbolical meanings opportunities for endless metamorphosis, this only contributes to the complexity of his basically spontaneous need to create.

Departing from most of 20th-century European sculpture, with which it shares innumerable stylistic affinities, Picasso's work affirms its own special imminence of alternatives. Lipchitz's sculpture goes through several related Cuboid-Expressionist stages, Arp's and Brancusi's show a mingling of organic impulses and inanimate material—all three men employ a few metaphors to attain a fairly stable imagery beneath which they can work out handsome permutations. With Picasso, the stabilizing feature is the inevitability of metaphor itself, something to which he is dedicated as to a principle, and which transcends the small handful of his themes: figures, heads and still lifes. The surprise is that, while allegiance to a principle tends to abstract the created work, Picasso's implementation is almost unreflectively practical. He has, not so much a habit of thought, as a primary source capacity to "see" the results of switching terms, and of associating a wealth of differing forms analogically within the same context—or, conversely, of regularizing the forms but changing their contexts. All this was very ably expressed by Leo Steinberg fifteen years ago in *Partisan Review*:

> He knows . . . that a man's hand may manifest itself as a rake, pestle, mallet, cup, cantilever, pincer, vise or broom . . . . In actual vision the hand is an infinity of variegated forms. Its common factor is not any ontological handshape, but a protean energy with only a positional and functional relation to the arm, and to the object handled . . . . Picasso . . . banishes the *a priori* vision which must ever find conceptual permanence despite visible change. His manual formulae stand not for Being, but for function, operation. Adaptability and change are the sole measure of reality. And it is on behalf of such reality, as well as of design, that his sleights of hand are wrought.

It cannot be said that Picasso's "reality" has been planned, any more than that it has been improvised. So complete is his relentless functionalism that he can identify with the guiding motion of displacement itself.

Though Mr. Steinberg's remarks referred to Picasso's painting, they are as

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relevant to his sculpture, which seems to "act out," not merely allude to, incessant realignments of compositional anatomy. Thus, frequently in his three-dimensional work, where forks stand in for hands, and bicycle handle bars become a bull's horns, the piece seems to have come into being, or rather, been thrown together, as a "performance" of his intuitions. It has no trouble justifying itself by virtue of the speed and manipulative skill through which sign language is juggled to make a startling cipher of action, work or expression.

As a result, Picasso escapes two of the outstanding clichés of 20th-century sculpture: the archetypal *Gestalt* and the timeless reference (e.g., Giacometti and Henry Moore). Far from wanting to escape its particular temporal circumstances, or to challenge the ages by its durability, his sculpture is evidence only of a passing instant of perception. And in contrast to the hammering out and refinement of "meaningful" earth, or better primal shapes, it mimes a possibility of gesture that exists in free exchange with hundreds of others. Not that it is provisional, for what has come to hand, and then been strapped, glued, nailed, cut, incised, modeled, painted or juxtaposed, has a uniqueness and finality of its own. Its particular constant is precisely its devotion to the activity of perception. Ultimately, even when it is a matter of bronze casts, this work does not give the impression of being "sculpture," that is, a *statement* molded especially through and out of the rigidity of certain materials; rather, it is an *articulation* that strikes a witty bargain with them. There is no artiness about Picasso's sculpture because he has no time or interest to give it a "look" or finish. What makes it indisputably his is not any beauty of material, sensuousness of touch, or intricacy of space but the overarching idea that every joining is also a fragmentation, the two actions welded together in a physical presence that makes them known simultaneously.

Contradictory levels of meaning have, of course, been a feature of art for centuries. The architect Robert Venturi has commented upon "double functioning" and the "both-and" phenomena as elements of building complexity and interpretation in his field. "The double-functioning elements pertain more to the relation of the part to the whole. Both-and emphasizes double meanings over double-functions." If Mannerist architecture provides much of the inspiration for this hypothesis, then a mannerist sensibility must inflect Cubism, where the dualistic roles of elements is the most indigenous operational principle. Already in his 1909 bronze "Woman's Head," Picasso is seeking to manifest the discontinuity of all planes and yet let them hold, as an aggregate, the full volume of the head. His wire, cardboard, and sheet-metal constructions, of 1912-14, venture much further in wanting to accommodate the flattened components of guitars and still lifes into a shallow yet real space, while retaining their pictorial and hence illusory context. These are not so much extrapolations from the idea of collage, as they are concretized slices from the world of his painting, having the same morphology, but now playing off schematized wooden knife or glass forms against actual objects, like tassels. Both exist in three dimensions, are "there," but retain the sense of their differing conceptual origins. Moreover, Picasso can incorporate some of the surroundings, showing that they are at once part of the assembled structure and the space which encloses it. Finally, he introduces painting once again, in the guise of stipples or crisscrosses, such that a "real" decoration punctuates his deliberately artificial still lifes.

No better example of this can be found than his famous and exquisite "Glass of Absinthe," 1914, modeled originally in wax, of which there are six casts in

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bronze, all painted differently, though in each instance topped with a real spoon. That this is no mere gymnastic, hit-and-run artist is demonstrated simply by the mutations of the word "real" to which any analysis of his work must bear witness. By way of profound illustration of the word "simultaneity," Picasso underscores the fact that adaptability and change can occur between our notions of the re-created and the actual; that, indeed, any switch on one of these levels implies a reciprocal alteration on the other. It is part of his dazzlingly comprehensive program that double meanings and double functions are identified with each other.

The next instance of concentrated sculptural activity in Picasso's career occurs at the very end of the twenties, when, in collaboration with Gonzalez, he learned to employ arc welding as a means of freeing the composition from its traditional mass by opening up wire lines to twist, bend, curve or brace through the air. Just as each form is a pared-down symbol of figural characteristics, so their silhouettes become anagrams of drawing. Metaphor now encompasses the whole spatial entity rather than, as before, infiltrating various strata within the ensemble. Concomitantly, these works—"Woman in the Garden" (1929-30) and "Head of a Woman" (1931)—become the embodiment of energies held tautly in suspension. Their blend of totemic primitivism and synthetic late Cubism lends them a starkness and power as humanistic in effect as the still lifes were metaphysical in tone.

To these years also belongs a series of bronze heads, conventionally monolithic, with long columnar necks, that yet provide one of the great surprises of the show. It is the period when Picasso developed a bulbous, twisted vocabulary, half alarming, half comic, in its almost glandular punning on the human face. A masterpiece such as "Head of a Woman" (1932), is all nose, cheek and hair, indecipherably compounded in two or three simple bulky, rounded forms. It can be read as the truncated growth of a classic Greek profile lording it over a misplaced and sightless Egyptian eye, only to draw back into a Mongoloid forehead. If this be a memory image of the Antique, it is so with a vengeance. For Picasso is capable of subjecting whole traditions and their form consciousness to his impulses of adaptation, here particularly nightmarish in feeling. It is as if all the cross fertilization of the previous years had finally deposited some particularly virulent examples of inbreeding.

Despite an occasional fierce image, such as the justly celebrated "Man With Sheep" (1944), the more recent stretches of the show revel in a busy-handed playfulness in which the urge to compress and regroup sculptural forces subsides into endless ceramics, bibelots, toys, dolls, masks, cut-outs, etc. They are impish, bouncy and clever, the work of a man in full rapport with childhood fancy and the whole Mediterranean heritage, in about equal measure.

Simply as a revelation of the mind of one artist, in a medium that was a mere extension of his other work (no matter how fond he is of the sculpture in itself), this exhibition is a tour de force. As for its historical ramifications, despite the fact that the majority of the pieces are being shown for the first time, and hence, cannot be thought to have exerted direct influences, Picasso obviously anticipated every major development of sculpture up to the thirties. Even more, he crystallized its basic ideas in tough-minded, yet often smiling, works of art, whether, for the moment, they remind us of Assemblage, Dada, Constructivism, free-form sculpture or Surrealism. The show is magnificently presented, a credit to Rene d'Harnoncourt who installed it, and Roland Penrose who directed it.

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FILMS

ROBERT HATCH

I have been out of town for some time and must try to catch up.

Arthur Penn's *Bonnie and Clyde* is a mesmeric, shocking, often delightful and far from perfect film, and I think I know why it has generated an almost excessive amount of controversy. The complaint that it is not an accurate account of the Dust Bowl 1930s is beside the point, since it is not, nor intended to be, an accurate account of any decade. Its pale, nostalgic Technicolor and insistence on stilted group snapshots; on occasion, the marionette attitudes of its performers and syncopated pace of its action, make clear that it is dealing with legend, not life.

The movie's relevance, moreover, is less to its own era than to ours. The fun-loving Barrow gang, laughing and larking its murderous way through the depression-stunned small towns of the Southwest, rootless, aimless, squalid and lethal, was not, it now seems, a pois-

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onous symbol of temporary crisis but an early symptom of a deformed and inadequate society. As Penn tells it, Bonnie and Clyde robbed banks because they had no idea who they were. The money they got was never more than enough to keep them in hamburgers until they could pull a next job, but it was not fear of hunger that drove them, it was fear of anonymity. "We rob banks," they announced to strangers on the road, and smirked as they said it; they squandered the cash but treasured the press clippings. They did not kill from viciousness but from incompetence, and Clyde was unable to make love to Bonnie in their infantile world of romance on the run.

All this should strike the viewer with icy familiarity in our day of motorcycle gangs and flower children, Nazi insignia, cheap beads, incense, drugs, apathy and motiveless violence. I have some doubt that Bonnie and Clyde were quite the hallucinated children that Penn makes them, but in retrospective fiction they legitimately become so.

The fault of the picture is that emotionally it is somewhat untrustworthy. The cast, led by Warren Beatty and Faye Dunaway, is eloquent, intelligent and marvelously plastic. Indeed, in Penn's hands it becomes too plastic, for the director seems uncertain as to his attitude toward his material, and his players dexterously act it in a variety of styles. At times one seems to be entirely on the outside, witnessing a clinical demonstration; then the filter shifts and we are enveloped in sudsy sentiment. Passages are offered in an estranging, mocking slapstick, only to merge into old-fashioned chase melodrama and then into the pain of real emotion and real laceration from real bullets. The effect is morally queasy; it leads to charges of exploitation, sensationalism and irresponsibility. This was perhaps bound to happen, but it may be unfair. I think Penn wanted to make a picture that, through poetic remove from the extravagance of its incidents, would both gratify as entertainment and instruct as fable. It is not easy to drive that tandem vehicle, but *Bonnie and Clyde* comes near enough success to make its intention clear.

Shirley Clarke, a director who employs an elegantly disciplined understanding of cinema form to investigate extreme situations (*The Connection, The Cool World*), has made in *Portrait of Jason* one of the most daring films ever screened. I refer at this point not to the content of the picture—which is certainly daring in the usual sense—but to its structural idea: for an hour and three-quarters one camera holds its eye on one man, sitting, lounging, posing in a small room and talking about himself. You would suppose that, whatever the merit of such a project for the specialist's archives, it could not possibly work as public entertainment. But it does work, and brilliantly.

Miss Clarke has been both resourceful and acute. By recording on the sound track the voices of herself and her associates, exchanging technical information or cueing the subject, by frequently permitting the picture to go out of focus and occasionally allowing the screen to fall dark as the voice carries on, she turns the making of the picture into an aspect of its content. For me, Miss Clarke used the device of throwing her subject completely out of focus too often and for too long at a time. I am told that her purpose was to relieve the viewer at moments when she thought the intensity of the image was becoming excessive—above a reasonable pain threshold—but as I watched, the device seemed in use primarily to mark breaks or transitions and, like any repeated film convention of that sort, it quickly became obtrusive. Nevertheless, Miss Clarke's style of on-set informality (which she used even more elaborately in *The Connection,* where the text of the original play supplied the motive) gives her work a sense of immediacy that is electrifying.

And Miss Clarke was acute in discern-

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ing the cinematic possibilities of the man who calls himself Jason. This homosexual Negro male prostitute and sometime houseboy is gifted with a power to convey his ideas and impose his personality that is altogether exceptional. His body is genuinely elegant and his face is so eloquent of his thoughts as to seem handsome, which indeed it is not. He is intelligent, witty, observant, satiric, utterly without reserve. He has been places and done things and knows to a fine tuning how to play back his life.

He is also self-deluded and desperate; his compulsive confessions are near-mad attempts to break himself into endurable fragments, his iterated determination to become a night-club performer is an agony of self-contempt (and his demonstration of what his act might be is an embarrassment almost beyond endurance; Jason has talent only for exhibiting himself). The sight and sound of this man laughing at himself can be called, with almost no hyperbole, a hellish spectacle. The suspense of the picture, in short, is whether or not Jason can get through it without going completely to pieces. By dint of alcohol, marijuana and innumerable cigarettes, refreshed by rests from time to time, he just manages.

A magnificent picture—and I suspect that if I were as open as Jason I would be disgusted with myself for having sat through it. I am not a sadist or a voyeur, I don't crowd around street calamities or put my ear to keyholes. Why should I sit there and allow this pathetic, appalling man to tell me his story? Particularly toward the end, when an off-camera voice goads him to higher emotional excesses, why didn't I flee such suffering? I don't know whether or not Jason was a conspirator in that sudden attack; it may have been all camp. In any case, it was ugly. Of course, I "sympathize" with Jason—that is, I pity him—but what good is that to him or me? It is not true that all human experience is instructive—I can learn from Jason nothing that is of the slightest use to me, and since I have neither the intention nor the means to be of any use to him. I am treating him as a strange thing, not a fellow man. All that insight and wit is remarkable only because it is incongruous; I've heard better talk a thousand times, and I'm patronizing Jason by extolling his human attributes.

I'm a special case, perhaps, in that I can say I was there to report on the picture, but that too is not really honest—I've walked out on more movies than I can remember. No, I stayed because Miss Clarke and her terrible discovery compelled me to stay. A magnificent picture, and a damned wicked one.

I wish that some of Shirley Clarke's talent for exposition had been available for *Titicut Follies*. Its director, Frederick Wiseman, is a man clearly motivated by social zeal, but he does not appear to understand that the meaning of what a camera shows is as much in the context as in the content—a generalization that has particular force when the scene is the Bridgewater State Hospital for the criminally insane.

As far as content is concerned, Mr. Wiseman is relentlessly explicit. His documentation amply confirms what one had suspected—that Bridgewater, and presumably dozens of institutions like it across the country, are Gothic anachronisms. Its corridors, cells, common rooms and baths, with their exposed pipes, naked lights, peeling walls and prevailing atmosphere of dampness, look like the large-mammal house in an old-fashioned zoo. The resemblance is heightened by the life of the place: the inmates spend a large part of their time naked in the airless warmth and the large, slow-moving guards treat them with the indulgent informality of keepers for their charges. However, I can't recall ever seeing a zoo custodian bait the animals, as some of the guards ride their prisoners. It looks cruel, but I don't know that it is; the men may get some satisfaction from the rough barking back and forth—they looked to be under sedation and would perhaps sink into apathy if not riled up. And since I was given no clue as to the mental prognosis for the group of patients shown in such scenes, I cannot judge whether or not purely custodial care is the best that can be done for them.

There are some doctors about the place—a very few—presumably devoting themselves to minds that might be cured. The one shown most prominently speaks with a heavy European accent, wears dark glasses, has a bad tic and seems bent on winning debating points with his patients. He, doesn't look to be the ideal man to deal with sick young men of rather provincial American backgrounds, but, again, he may be doing a good job under the circumstances. I'm not going to jump him merely because he's a type I would do a good deal to avoid—perhaps getting out of his clutches is part of the idea.

I watched a sad old man being forcibly fed in what looked like a slum kitchen. The doctor stood on a chair to pour the food down the tube, using as a container one of those cartons you find at a supermarket delicatessen counter, a cigarette dangling from his lips as he administered the nourishment. It was not an elegant scene, but when the ordeal was over the doctor gave the obdurate old fellow a rough pat and said he was a good patient. That may count for a lot.

And what about the musical show that gives the picture its name, and shots from which punctuate the documented routine? The camera never finds the performers off-stage. Are they the Bridgewater elite, is the show a part of their therapy, how does the audience respond (there is not a single shot into the house), is this a regular feature of the hospital life? No one could be interested in the ghoulish jamboree for its own merits, and if you don't know what it means in the Bridgewater setting there is not much to be gained from enduring it.

The film makes clear—what we already know—that institutions like Bridgewater are ill-equipped and understaffed (except for the guards, who seem to congregate like elephants in the cramped alleys). Recreation is almost nonexistent (a bare exercise ground where monomaniacs harangue their fellows, a birthday party, a tense little woman trying to get men in their 50s and 60s to play a game suitable for 5 year olds). It is shameful, but that it is a snake pit, I'm not prepared to say. That is a matter of context, and *Titicut Follies* offers no more context than the typical TV network one-hour "controversy." I feel expected to express outrage, and am willing to do so—something is obviously very wrong. But before I begin yelling I need to know the quality of the iniquity and the identity of the villains.

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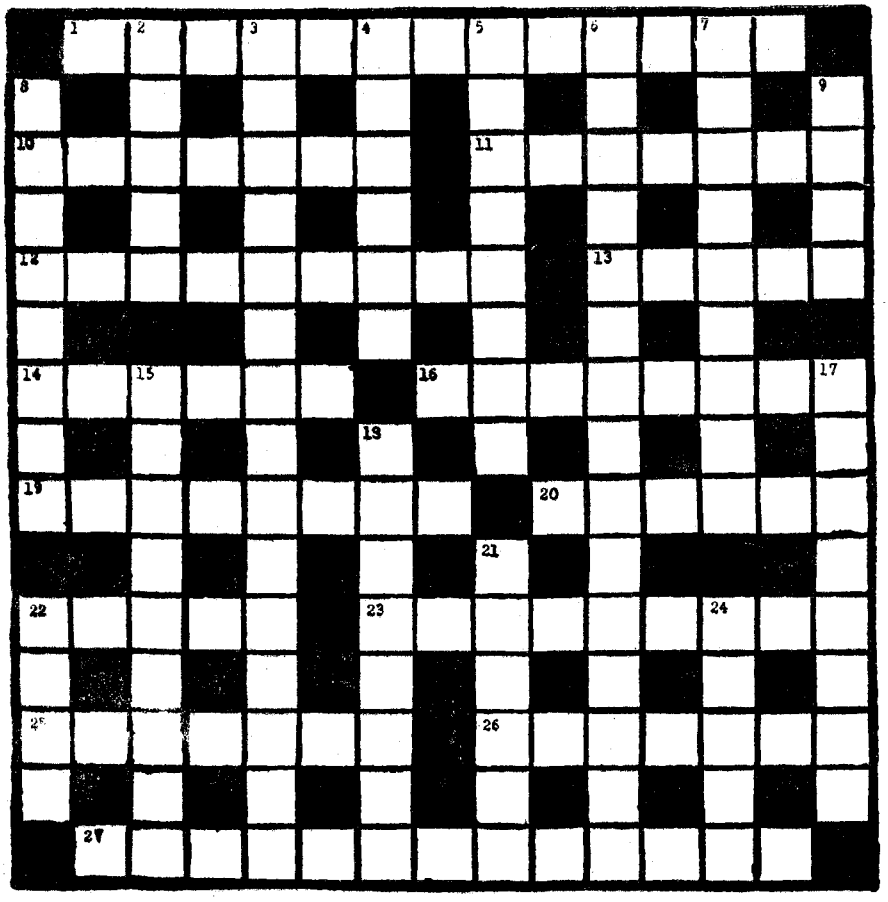

ACROSS:

1 But chandeliers are sometimes so heavy! (5,8)
10 Beat. (7)
11 Descriptive of a sometime-Homeric acquaintance? (7)
12 Certainly not a conveyance for the well-grounded traveler. (9)
13 Rushes to make up part of the band. (5)
14 Considering the shape the world is in, one belongs in a monastery! (6)
16 There's a game in back, with us following a Shakespearean advisor. (8)
19 Without remedy for the soft snap? (8)
20 Aspire to be the source of Xerxes' strength? (6)
22 Stick in society? (5)
23 People might be checks on the period of children before they start to go out. (9)
25 These should keep things on the right track. (7)
26 A bird, as part of the set? (7)
27 Was the speech to the end-man like a decree? (13)

DOWN:

2 During uprising help the foreign country. (5)
3 Did it represent an old trade union? (9,6)
4 Euphemism for fat? (6)
5 The unknown sign direction has no hope in it, perhaps, for a historian. (8)
6 With his hat on, a common man could be mistaken for a CIA type. (5-5,5)
7 They have a bad effect on lots of local people. (9)
8 Some get a kick out of swimming with it. (8)
9 Goes wild when showing what might be easily bruised in some people. (4)
15 Extensively tensile, like certain cave art. (4-5)
17 Wars might be confused with 8, according to what the bully sometimes does. (8)
18 May precede the ring announcement of the match. (8)
21 Consumptive. (6)
22 Said to be a hopeful sign. (4)
24 Put under, or between. (5)

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 1220

ACROSS: 1 Second mortgage; 9 Expects; 10 Climber; 11 Rattlers; 12 Ashore; 14 Locusts; 15 Bases; 17 Takes; 19 En route; 21 Sweeps; 23 Alembics; 25 Wheedle; 26 Beguine; 27 Establishments. DOWN: 1 Spearmint; 2 and 6 Capital gains; 3 Necklaces; 4 Mistrusted; 5 Race; 7 Gibbons; 8 Free; 13 Astrolabes; 15 Brummagem; 16 Semesters; 18 Keepers; 20 Edition; 21 Sows; 22 Padua; 24 Well.

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